United Nations S/2016/74

Security Council

Distr.: General
25 January 2016

Original: English

Letter dated 25 January 2016 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Denmark to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to write to you with regard to the summary statement by the Secretary-General of matters of which the Security Council is seized and of the stage reached in their consideration, dated 4 January 2016 (S/2016/10). I have the honour to inform you that Denmark requests that the following item, listed in paragraph 3 of the above-mentioned document, remain on the list of matters of which the Security Council is seized:

66. Briefing by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Peter Lehmann **Nielsen**
Ambassador
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

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United Nations A/70/706–S/2016/75

General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.: General
25 January 2016

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General Assembly
Seventieth session
Agenda items 35, 40 and 85

Protracted conflicts in the GUAM area and their implications for international peace, security and development

The situation in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan

The rule of law at the national and international levels

Security Council
Seventy-first year

Letter dated 25 January 2016 from the Permanent Representative of Azerbaijan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Upon instructions from my Government, I should like to convey the following.

In his letter dated 18 December 2015 addressed to the Secretary-General (A/70/663-S/2015/1020), the Permanent Representative of Armenia to the United Nations enclosed a "letter" and a so-called "instrument of ratification" of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, signed by two individuals presenting themselves as "president" and "minister of foreign affairs" of the so-called "NKR" — an unlawful separatist entity established by Armenia in the occupied Nagorno-Karabakh region of Azerbaijan.

According to article 26 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, only the States Members of the United Nations, the States Parties to the Statute of the International Court of Justice and the States which have been invited by the General Assembly of the United Nations can become parties to the said Covenant. As a matter of necessary interpretation under the principles of the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties and customary international law, there is no basis whatsoever for understanding the term "State" appearing in article 26 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights as including such unlawful entities as that established and controlled by Armenia in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan. Therefore, it is no coincidence that article 26 of the Covenant is referred to neither in the letter of the Permanent Representative of Armenia nor in what he calls the "instrument of ratification".

The request of the Permanent Representative of Armenia to circulate his letter and its annexes as a document of the General Assembly and the Security Council, in

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contravention of the procedure established in article 26 of the Covenant, clearly testifies to the provocative character of Armenia's action.

The fact that the Nagorno-Karabakh region is an integral part of the Republic of Azerbaijan has been consistently reaffirmed by the Security Council in its relevant resolutions, adopted in response to the occupation of the territories of the Republic of Azerbaijan. In those resolutions, the Security Council condemned the use of force against Azerbaijan and the occupation of its territories, reaffirmed the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Azerbaijan, the inviolability of international borders and the inadmissibility of the use of force for the acquisition of territory and demanded the immediate, complete and unconditional withdrawal of the occupying forces from all the occupied territories.

Accordingly, as a matter of law and fact, any "declarations" made by the unlawful regime established by Armenia in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan purporting to ratify international agreements or accede to them are invalid and have no legal effect whatsoever. Thus, the aforementioned letter and alleged submission of the so-called "legislative act" is just another piece of Armenia's provocation and political-legal adventurism as well as forgery designed to whitewash its ongoing aggression and violations against the Republic of Azerbaijan.

Equally hypocritical is that Armenia circulated the aforementioned "document", if one may call it so, on the very eve of another round of high-level talks between the Presidents of Azerbaijan and Armenia, under the auspices of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Minsk Group, which were held in Bern, Switzerland, on 19 December 2015. This is not surprising. Thus, in the wake of a previous presidential-level meeting in October 2014 in Paris, France, Armenia launched the unprecedented large-scale military provocations in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan.

Armenia has once again clearly demonstrated that it has chosen the path of escalation and aimed at undermining prospects for political settlement. The continuation of such provocative actions will inevitably render the talks within the OSCE Minsk Group meaningless.

I should be grateful if the text of the present letter would be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 35, 40 and 85, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Yashar **Aliyev**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

United Nations S/2016/76

Security Council

Distr.: General
26 January 2016
English
Original: French

Letter dated 25 January 2016 from the Permanent Representative of Burundi to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit herewith a letter from Mr. Pierre Nkurunziza, President of the Republic of Burundi, addressed to you following the visit by a delegation of the Security Council to Burundi on 21 and 22 January 2016.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Albert **Shingiro**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 25 January 2016 from the Permanent Representative of Burundi to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Letter from the President of Burundi to the President of the Security Council

At the outset, we would like to express to you our deep gratitude for the visit by a delegation of the Security Council to Burundi on 21 and 22 January 2016.

We welcome the transparency and spirit of mutual respect and cooperation that characterized our discussions on the situation in Burundi. We have taken note of the concerns expressed by the States members of the Council and of the advice and relevant observations formulated during those cordial and respectful discussions.

Following the visit, which we welcomed, taking into consideration the interests of the Burundian people and in keeping with our firm belief in the important good offices role of the Secretary-General, we have decided — and issued instructions accordingly to the officials of the services concerned — to make ourselves available to the Special Adviser of the Secretary-General, and to cooperate closely with his team in order to jointly determine the assistance required to support the inclusive national dialogue process and efforts in the areas of disarmament, security, human rights and development, while remaining open to any other contribution.

We are sincerely grateful for your visit, which reflects the clear interest that the international community has in Burundi. We are also grateful for the Secretary-General's efforts and good offices to assist Burundi in the areas of peacebuilding, democracy and, above all, the ongoing truth and reconciliation process.

You can rest assured of our desire and willingness to cooperate fully with the United Nations, in the national interests of Burundi.

(*Signed*) Pierre **Nkurunziza**
President of the Republic of Burundi

United Nations S/2016/77

Security Council

Distr.: General
26 January 2016

Original: English

Second report of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 7 of resolution 2233 (2015)

I. Introduction

1. In paragraph 7 of its resolution 2233 (2015), the Security Council requested that I report every three months on progress made towards fulfilling the mandate of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI). The present report covers key developments related to Iraq and provides an update on the activities of the United Nations in Iraq since the issuance of my report dated 26 October 2015 (S/2015/819).

II. Summary of key political developments pertaining to Iraq

A. Internal developments

2. During the reporting period, the Iraqi security forces, the Peshmerga, the popular mobilization forces and affiliates made significant territorial gains, notably through the recapture of Sinjar and the retaking of the seat of the provincial government in Ramadi.

3. During the reporting period, the Government of Iraq faced considerable political challenges in implementing its programme of reforms to counter corruption and address the ongoing economic and budgetary crisis. Intercommunal tensions and violent clashes in areas retaken from Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) constituted another key challenge and highlighted the need for rapid progress in national reconciliation.

4. In the Kurdistan region of Iraq, inter-party tensions, stemming in part from the political deadlock over the term and powers of the presidency, led to a reconfiguration of the Kurdistan Regional Government and affected the functioning of the Regional Parliament.

B. Political situation

5. During the reporting period, efforts to re-energize the national reconciliation process in Iraq focused on fostering a collective vision for reconciliation within the Sunni component and on establishing mutual understanding on what reconciliation entails.

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6. In an effort to consolidate the Sunni community's vision and representation in national reconciliation discussions, members of the Supreme Coordination Committee, established on 20 November, met Members of Parliament and Provincial Council members from six governorates, including Anbar, Baghdad, Diyala, Kirkuk, Ninewa and Salah al-Din, on 9 December, under the auspices of the parliamentary Speaker, Salim al-Jubouri, and attended by the President, Fuad Masum, and my Special Representative. The Speaker laid out a nine-point preliminary plan to prepare for the post-ISIL period and reiterated the demand to address the status of Sunni detainees held without charge.

7. The three presidencies, comprising the President, the Prime Minister and the Speaker of Parliament, continued to meet regularly to promote political inclusiveness and unity, and on 7 October created a higher presidential committee for national reconciliation to coordinate and advance national reconciliation efforts. The committee met on 30 December. The three presidencies also agreed to meet in January 2016 with the leaders of key political forces and blocs to define the way forward on national reconciliation. However, progress in expediting national reconciliation legislation remains stalled. The Council of Representatives concluded its second reading of the draft general amnesty law on 14 November, but ongoing disagreements have prevented its passage. Similarly, the drafts for the justice and accountability act, the banning of the Baath Party act and the national guard law remain stalled in Parliament.

8. Pro-reform protests continued into a sixth month, mainly in the southern governorates and Baghdad. However, participation has gradually dwindled amid a sense of frustration over the slow pace of reform and the lack of visible improvement in the delivery of services. On 29 October, the Prime Minister, Haider al-Abadi, met protest coordinators and assured them of his commitment to the reform agenda. On 26 December, protest coordinators from various governorates met in Maysan governorate and agreed to create a unified leadership and to continue the protests until popular demands for reform were met.

9. In mid-October, the Prime Minister initiated measures to reduce the salaries of civil servants in four ministries (Public Health, Higher Education, Oil and Electricity). Given the subsequent adverse political reaction and protests by civil servants, the Prime Minister instituted a governmental committee to review the measures. The 2016 federal budget included a provision for a cut of 3 per cent across the board in the salaries and allowances of all government officials and pensioners.

10. Some progress was also noted in the prosecution of officials accused of corruption. The Minister of Trade, Mallas Mohammed al-Kasnazani, who was subsequently dismissed by the Prime Minister, and other senior Ministry officials were indicted by the Integrity Court on corruption charges on 20 October. In Babil, on 16 November, the Criminal Court sentenced a Provincial Council member, Ollaiwi Farhan, to three years' imprisonment on corruption charges and further noted that the Integrity Commission had referred to the Court a corruption case against the former Governor, Mohammed al-Masoudi.

11. The Prime Minister's reform measures faced opposition from some national political partners. In late October, some Members of Parliament from the State of Law Coalition threatened to bring a no-confidence motion against the Prime Minister, since they felt that he had not consulted adequately on his reforms. On

2 November, the Council of Representatives voted unanimously to request the Prime Minister to refrain from implementing reforms in a manner that could infringe the separation of powers or the Constitution.

12. On 3 November, in a statement, the Prime Minister reiterated his commitment to continue reforms and fight corruption, in accordance with the will of the Iraqi people. He also issued a statement on 12 November reassuring Iraqi political partners of his openness to discussing the steps taken in pursuit of reform. On 24 November, the Federal Supreme Court dismissed on technical grounds an appeal by the former Vice-President, Osama al-Nujaifi, who challenged the constitutionality of the abolition of the vice-presidential positions as part of the reform efforts of the Government of Iraq.

13. Iraq continued to face daunting economic challenges, owing mainly to low global oil prices, the cost of the war against ISIL and the cost of addressing the needs of the growing number of internally displaced persons nationwide. On 16 December, the Council of Representatives approved the 2016 Federal Budget Law, the first time since 2006 that the proposed national budget was approved without delay. The national budget for 2016 presents an overall expected expenditure of $89.5 billion, a decrease of $13.1 billion from the budget for 2015. Iraq's expected oil revenue amounts to $59 billion. The deficit in the national budget is expected to reach $20.4 billion and will be financed through borrowing. Several provincial governments have complained that their allocations in the national budget are inadequate for their developmental needs. The President approved the 2016 Federal Budget Law on 3 January.

14. Baghdad and Erbil continue to disagree on the extent to which either side has complied with the terms of their December 2014 agreement on energy exports and revenue-sharing. Senior representatives of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, the Kurdistan Democratic Party and other Kurdish political parties visited Baghdad to discuss Baghdad-Erbil relations, including budgetary issues, with federal government officials, but a long-proposed formal high-level visit from Erbil to Baghdad has yet to take place.

15. On 12 October, protests lasting several days erupted in Sulaymaniyah over delays in the payment of civil servants' salaries, linked in part to the inconclusive talks between Kurdish parties on the issue of the Kurdistan Regional Presidency. The protests resulted in the deaths of five people, including members of the Kurdistan Democratic Party and Gorran. The Kurdistan Democratic Party blamed Gorran for the unrest, expelled Gorran ministers from the Kurdistan Regional Government and barred the Gorran-affiliated Speaker of the Regional Parliament from returning to Erbil to resume his duties. The political stalemate continues over the Kurdistan Regional Presidency and related matters in the Kurdistan region of Iraq, and work at the Kurdistan Regional Government and Regional Parliament has been affected.

16. In addition to its internal political stalemate and disagreements with the federal Government, the Kurdistan region of Iraq has been simultaneously affected by the drop in oil prices and the continuing challenge of accommodating internally displaced persons from across the country. On 21 December, the Council of Ministers of the Kurdistan Regional Government unveiled a package of reforms that included a reduction of 50 per cent in the allowances of high-ranking officials and the suspension of all allowances to Members of Parliament of the Kurdistan region

of Iraq. On 28 December, the heads of the political blocs in Parliament, with the exception of Gorran, reconvened for the first time since 12 October to discuss the proposed package of reforms.

C. Security

17. The security situation in Iraq remained highly volatile during the reporting period. Military operations focused on recovering areas under ISIL control in Anbar, Ninewa and Salah al-Din governorates and on consolidating territorial gains made against ISIL with the support of the Global Coalition to Counter ISIL and other partners.

18. Intercommunal tensions continued to threaten national reconciliation efforts on the ground in Iraq. On 12 November, clashes between the popular mobilization forces and the Peshmerga in Tuz Khurmatu, in Salah al-Din governorate, claimed the lives of 21 people. This led to further violence, during which an estimated 20 people were killed and 40 others were reportedly abducted from a checkpoint operated by the popular mobilization forces. Despite a ceasefire reached on 13 November, armed clashes recurred on 3 January. Since the liberation of Sinjar in late October, multiple clashes have led to a number of fatalities.

19. In Anbar governorate, the Iraqi security forces and tribal fighters, supported by the Global Coalition through air strikes, retook central parts of Ramadi, including the provincial governorate compound, and raised the national flag at the provincial police headquarters on 28 December. The Iraqi security forces are continuing their efforts to expel ISIL from the remaining areas of Ramadi while the retaken areas of the city are being secured by tribal fighters. In the first week of January, tribal fighters in the cities of Haditha and al-Baghdadi repulsed attacks by ISIL.

20. In Salah al-Din, the territorial gains made against ISIL were preserved, despite efforts by ISIL to regain momentum through diversionary attacks. Following the liberation of Baiji on 19 October, ISIL stepped up suicide attacks, indirect fire and complex attacks to the north-east of the city. The Iraqi security forces and the popular mobilization forces have repelled repeated attacks by ISIL in areas close to the western outskirts of Samarra. On 23 October, 69 hostages facing imminent risk of execution were freed in a joint raid by Peshmerga and special forces of the United States of America on an ISIL safe house in Hawija district, which resulted in the deaths of 20 militants and 1 United States soldier.

21. Baghdad continued to see the highest rate of attacks targeting civilians in the country. During the reporting period, Baghdad witnessed 374 incidents targeting civilians and 110 incidents targeting the Iraqi security forces. The deadliest attacks included suicide attacks at a Shiite mosque and a Shiite funeral in eastern Baghdad on 13 November, in which 43 civilians were reportedly killed and 90 injured. An earlier suicide attack on 8 November targeted a popular mobilization forces gathering in Sadr City, reportedly killing 20 of its members and wounding another 28. Unidentified bodies continued to be found on a daily basis in Baghdad city and outlying areas. Out of 130 recordings of unidentified bodies during the reporting period, 107 were in Baghdad.

D. Regional and international developments

22. During the reporting period, Iraq continued efforts to enhance its bilateral and multilateral relations and to secure political, military and economic support in its ongoing fight against ISIL.

23. High-level delegations from the Government of Iraq conducted bilateral visits to China, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Japan, Kuwait, Oman, the Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Turkey and the United Arab Emirates to seek assistance in overcoming the ISIL threat and economic cooperation. On 15 December, further to the decision by Saudi Arabia to reopen its embassy in Baghdad and consulate in Erbil, a number of Saudi Arabian diplomatic personnel arrived in Iraq. On 21 December, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Kuwait announced that officials from both countries would soon finalize an agreement under which Iraq would supply Kuwait with gas. Following a visit by the Prime Minister of Iraq to China on 21 and 22 December, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of China announced that bilateral relations would be elevated to establish a China-Iraq strategic partnership. On 29 December, the National Security Adviser, Falah al-Fayyad, visited the Russian Federation and presented a letter from the Prime Minister to the President of the Russian Federation, Vladimir Putin, in order to strengthen bilateral ties and step up efforts to counter ISIL.

24. At the multilateral level, the President of Iraq attended the Fourth Summit of Arab and South American Countries, held in Riyadh on 10 November, and the summit of the Gas Exporting Countries Forum, held in Tehran on 22 November, with both resulting in pronouncements of support for Iraq. On 30 November, the President took part at the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, held in Paris. The Minister for Foreign Affairs of Iraq, Ibrahim al-Jaafari, participated in the three meetings of the International Syria Support Group, held on 30 October, 14 November and 18 December, and in an extraordinary meeting of the Council of the League of Arab States, held on 24 December. At its annual ministerial meeting, held on 10 December in Riyadh, the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf called upon the Government of Iraq and the Council of Representatives to address corruption, improve service delivery, enhance political inclusiveness and take concrete steps towards reform.

25. Iraq is continuing its military cooperation with the Global Coalition to Counter ISIL, as well as with members of the quadrilateral intelligence-sharing mechanism, which includes representatives of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Russian Federation and the Syrian Arab Republic. On 4 November, at a small group meeting, the Global Coalition affirmed its continuing support to the Iraqi security forces and for the efforts of the Government of Iraq to address corruption, decentralize federal powers and reconcile ethnic and sectarian divisions in Iraq. On 29 October, Iraq announced the establishment of a joint intelligence-sharing centre, in collaboration with the European Union.

26. During the reporting period, the Government of Iraq issued multiple statements in which it stressed the need for its neighbours and international partners to uphold its sovereignty and territorial integrity. On 1 December, the Office of the Prime Minister issued a statement welcoming the support of the Government's international partners to Iraqi forces through the provision of arms, training and

advice, but indicated that the Government had no need for ground forces. On 3 December, the Prime Minister issued a statement reiterating his Government's rejection of foreign ground troops and warned that it would consider a ground fighting force an act of hostility.

27. The reporting period saw diplomatic tensions between the Governments of Iraq and Turkey regarding the presence of Turkish troops at a training camp in Bashiqa district, in the northern part of Ninewa governorate. The presence of the camp, which, according to the Turkish authorities, had been established in March 2015 to provide training to Iraqi volunteers, had never been acknowledged by the Government of Iraq.

28. In that regard, on 4 December, the Prime Minister of Iraq stated that Turkish troops had entered Iraqi territory on 3 December without the authorization of the Government of Iraq and that he considered it a breach of the sovereignty of Iraq. On 7 December, the Ambassador of Turkey to Iraq informed the Minister of Defence of Iraq, Khaled al-Obeidi, that Turkey had stopped the entry of troops into Iraq.

29. Bilateral efforts to de-escalate tensions included a visit to Baghdad on 10 December by two special envoys of the Prime Minister of Turkey, Ahmet Davutoğlu, to meet the Prime Minister of Iraq, as well as telephone conversations between the two parties' Ministers for Foreign Affairs and Defence.

30. At a Security Council meeting held on 18 December at the request of the Government of Iraq, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Iraq and the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations briefed the Council on their respective positions with regard to the Turkish military presence in Iraq.

31. On 19 December, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkey stated its support for the sovereignty of Iraq and its readiness to coordinate efforts more closely to defeat ISIL. The statement indicated that Turkey considered the situation a miscommunication between it and the Government of Iraq regarding the deployment of "Turkish protection forces" and that Turkey was continuing to remove military forces from Ninewa. In a statement on 21 December, the Council of Ministers of Iraq welcomed the announced withdrawal by Turkey and expressed hope for a complete withdrawal.

32. On 24 December, in response to a request by Iraq, the Council of the League of Arab States held an extraordinary meeting at the ministerial level, in which it termed the Turkish deployment a violation of Iraqi sovereignty and a threat to Arab security. On 30 December, in a telephone conversation with the Prime Minister of Turkey, the Prime Minister of Iraq reiterated his call for the formal withdrawal of the Turkish troops from Iraqi territory.

33. On 16 December, 27 Qatari nationals were abducted in Muthanna governorate. On 18 December, the Prime Minister of Iraq informed the Prime Minister of Qatar, Sheikh Abdallah ben Nasser al-Thani, that the Iraqi authorities were working to secure their release. On 22 December, the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf condemned the abduction as a breach of international law and called upon Baghdad to take immediate and decisive measures to ensure the safety and release of those abducted. On 27 December, the Iraqi security forces reported the arrest of four suspects in relation to the abduction.

III. Update on the activities of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq and the United Nations country team

A. Political activities

34. During the reporting period, UNAMI continued to support the Government of Iraq in its efforts to promote inclusive national reconciliation among all Iraqi components and political groups, civil society and local communities. My Special Representative followed up with a wide range of interlocutors on priority legislation for national reconciliation and the Prime Minister's reform agenda, and underlined the need for openness, partnership, inclusiveness and broad consultations in decision-making to promote unity and effective governance. He also stressed the need to avoid political polarization over the reform programme.

35. My Special Representative undertook numerous visits to the Kurdistan region of Iraq to encourage all interlocutors in the region to break the ongoing political deadlock through inclusive political dialogue. In the course of his outreach activities in the governorates, my Special Representative visited Najaf on 1 November, Basra on 2 November and Kirkuk on 14 December, meeting religious leaders and Provincial Council representatives to discuss the prevailing political and security situation, efforts towards national reconciliation and reform, and other challenges facing the governorates.

36. On 15 December, UNAMI organized a workshop in Baghdad on the theme "Learning from precedent: the cost of failure and benefits of success in coming to terms with the past", in collaboration with the Reconciliation, Accountability and Justice Affairs Committee of the Council of Representatives and the Office of the Prime Minister. During the workshop, which was attended by 30 Members of Parliament, government officials and clerics, participants were encouraged to find common ground on the Justice and Accountability Act and the Banning of the Baath Party Act as a means to further reconciliation efforts. In an effort to encourage the role of civil society organizations in the national reconciliation process, UNAMI organized two workshops on 16 December in Baghdad to explore ways to improve cooperation between the Government of Iraq, the international community and civil society organizations in reconciliation and peacebuilding activities.

37. Amid a rise in incidents of intercommunal tensions in liberated areas, my Special Representative and interlocutors discussed measures to promote peaceful coexistence. Following the clashes in Tuz Khurmatu, my Deputy Special Representative for Political Affairs met numerous interlocutors to de-escalate tensions and promote the protection of civilians.

38. My Special Representative and my Deputy Special Representative for Political Affairs also met representatives of minority communities to discuss concerns relating to the potential effects of the proposed national identity law on the minority ethnic and religious communities of Iraq. UNAMI and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights in Iraq called upon members of the Council of Representatives to address deficiencies in the legislation that could undermine the principles of pluralism and diversity in Iraq.

39. My Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide, Adama Dieng, undertook a mission to Iraq from 1 to 7 November. In his meetings, the Special Adviser

condemned human rights violations — which may amount to genocide and crimes against humanity — in areas controlled by ISIL, and insisted that the fight against the terrorist group be conducted in full respect of human rights and international humanitarian law.

40. On 16 and 20 November, in Baghdad and Erbil, respectively, UNAMI and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) jointly organized conferences on the protection of diversity and the prevention of incitement to mark the International Day for Tolerance. The conferences brought together Iraqi religious leaders and faith-based organizations, among other stakeholders, who pledged to use their political and social standing to help to change attitudes and overcome stereotypes, and underlined the importance of legal provisions to celebrate diversity and protect minority components. The importance of revising education curricula and improving the training of teachers was also emphasized.

41. UNAMI continued its efforts to promote women's rights in Iraq in support of the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000). Starting on 25 November, the United Nations led a series of events and activities in Iraq to mark the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence campaign and highlight the plight of women as the group most affected by armed conflict. In Baghdad, on 25 and 26 November, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) held dialogues with representatives of women's groups to develop a plan of action to promote women as agents of change and transformative leaders for reconciliation and stabilization in their communities. The campaign culminated in Baghdad on 10 December with the commemoration of Human Rights Day, under the theme "Our Rights. Our Freedoms. Always.", held by UNAMI and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights in Iraq, in partnership with the Council of Representatives. The event launched a year-long campaign to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the two International Covenants on Human Rights: the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

42. In a meeting held in Baghdad on 7 November, officials of the recently abolished State Ministry for Women's Affairs and representatives of the Independent High Commission for Human Rights, UNAMI and civil society organizations concluded that the abolition of the Ministry was a setback to the fulfilment of Iraq's international obligations to achieve gender equality and women's empowerment, specifically in terms of implementing the national strategy on the advancement of women, the national strategy on the elimination of violence against women and the national action plan on resolution 1325 (2000). Participants called for the creation of an independent entity, in cooperation with the Council of Representatives, to monitor the status of and promote women's rights through collaborative action with civil society organizations.

B. Electoral assistance

43. UNAMI continued to provide targeted and specialized electoral support to the Independent High Electoral Commission of Iraq and related institutions as they prepared for the 2017 Provincial Council elections. This included support to the

Commission's efforts to ensure the full participation of all Iraqi citizens, such as the establishment of a high-level committee on internally displaced persons and the development of special procedures for the registration of internally displaced persons. UNAMI continued to work with the Commission in making the process more inclusive. The Commission is continuing to collect the biometric data of voters as part of its preparations for the elections. As at 30 December, the biometric data of 3.94 million voters had been collected.

44. UNAMI continued to support the Government of Iraq in reviewing and consolidating its legal framework for elections. In that regard, UNAMI worked closely with a committee of representatives from the Council of Ministers, the Independent High Electoral Commission, shura councils and the Ministry of Justice to revise the law on provincial council elections (Law No. 36 of 2008, as amended). The review of the law is expected to be completed in early 2016.

45. Following the adoption of the Political Parties Law by the Council of Representatives in August 2015, the Independent High Electoral Commission decided to establish a political entities directorate, which will play a vital role in the Commission's interaction with political entities. UNAMI is working with the Commission to ensure that the new directorate is staffed with people of integrity and high professional competence.

46. UNAMI provided advice in discussions between the Independent High Electoral Commission and the Kurdistan Independent High Electoral Commission, which resulted in the signing of a memorandum of understanding between the two institutions in October 2015 that clarified areas of cooperation, coordination and experience-sharing.

C. Human rights developments and activities

47. Armed conflict, acts of violence and terrorism continue to take a grave toll on civilians in Iraq. From 27 October to 31 December, UNAMI recorded a minimum of 2,944 civilian casualties (1,085 killed and 1,859 wounded), bringing the total number of civilian casualties in Iraq since the beginning of 2015 to at least 22,370 (7,515 killed and 14,855 wounded).

48. UNAMI received numerous reports alleging serious violations of international human rights and humanitarian law perpetrated against civilians, in particular by ISIL. Members of diverse ethnic and religious communities, women, children, people with disabilities and the elderly remain especially vulnerable. I continue to have grave fears for the safety of up to 1,500 women and children, mostly from the Yazidi community, who are being held in captivity by ISIL, and all civilians who remain subject to ISIL control.

49. UNAMI continued to receive reports of abductions, killings and persecution by ISIL of those opposed to its ideology or rules. On 21 and 22 November, ISIL murdered 12 university students in Mosul. On 22 November, ISIL murdered two men in Fallujah for alleged homosexual acts by throwing them from a building. On 6 December, ISIL publicly killed a man in Mosul who was accused of practising magic. On 7 December, ISIL publicly murdered an imam in Mosul who had refused to praise the organization. On 9 December, ISIL murdered a female secondary school teacher in Mosul for purportedly refusing to teach the new curriculum issued

by the group. Individuals associated with the Government of Iraq and the Iraqi security forces were also targeted. On 25 and 30 November, respectively, ISIL publicly murdered a female former candidate to Parliament and a female former candidate to the Provincial Council in Mosul. On 29 November, in Mosul, ISIL killed three former police officers accused of cooperating with the Iraqi security forces.

50. Following the retaking of Sinjar, in Ninewa, by the Peshmerga on 13 November, at least 8 new mass grave sites containing victims murdered by ISIL were discovered, bringing the total number of such graves discovered to date to at least 16. Government officials informed UNAMI that they had neither the resources nor the expertise to adequately protect or excavate these sites, with the possible loss or damage of forensic evidence and means of identification of the remains. ISIL also continued to destroy sites of cultural and religious significance. On 6 November, ISIL used explosives to destroy a convent in Tal Kaif district, in Ninewa, and on 14 November it destroyed a Sunni mosque in Tal Afar district, also in Ninewa.

51. UNAMI continued to receive reports alleging that armed groups associated with government security forces had perpetrated human rights violations, often targeting members of the Sunni Arab community. For instance, since May 2015, UNAMI has received a number of reports that members of the Sunni Arab community were abducted by Shiite armed groups at Bzebiz Bridge and other locations in Anbar governorate, some of whom were reportedly freed after payment of ransom, while others were either killed or remain missing. Reports were also received of the extensive destruction of civilian properties in Baiji district, in Salah al-Din, subsequent to its recapture by the Iraqi security forces and the popular mobilization forces on 21 October. On 22 October, following a suicide car bomb attack in Tuz Khurmatu district, in Salah al-Din, Shiite armed groups abducted at least 175 Sunni Arab community members, some of whom remain in captivity. Internally displaced persons continue to face barriers to their return. On 1 November, Shiite armed groups, reportedly part of the popular mobilization forces, prevented up to 300 families from the Sunni Arab community from returning to several villages in Yathrib subdistrict, in Salah al-Din.

52. Other armed groups carried out attacks on members of the Shia community. On 30 November, a suicide bomb attack in Baghdad killed three and injured nine civilians, many of whom were marking the Shia religious observance of Arba'een.

53. The continuing pattern of targeted killings threatens to disturb social cohesion and heighten sectarian tensions in Iraq. In Kirkuk, on 1 December, the head of the Arab bloc in the Kirkuk Provincial Council and his wife were assassinated. Since May 2015, six other Arab community leaders have been killed in targeted attacks in Kirkuk by unidentified assailants. In Babil, on 3 January, explosions targeted three Sunni mosques and a Sunni cleric was assassinated, which coincided with the news of the execution of Sheikh Nimr al-Nimr. Before the recapture of Sinjar on 12 November, approximately 163 Sunni Arab families fled from villages north-east of Sinjar to Ayadiya subdistrict, in Tal Afar district, but were denied entry to territory controlled by the Peshmerga. The families remain stranded between Peshmerga and ISIL lines and their humanitarian situation is reported to be critical.

54. UNAMI received reports of possible reprisals by Yazidi armed groups in the aftermath of the recapture of Sinjar. On 14 November, a Yazidi armed group entered two Sunni Arab villages, N'eni'a and Golat, north-east of Sinjar, and looted and

destroyed property. On 15 November, another Yazidi armed group entered a Kurdish village, Qabousiya, and reportedly shot and injured the village chief and his brother.

55. Air strikes and shelling continued to cause civilian casualties. However, the exact number of and responsibility for the casualties remains uncertain, owing to difficulties in verifying information. There were reports of three incidents between 9 and 16 November, in which a total of 27 civilians were killed and many more were injured, in the areas of Qayyara, in Ninewa governorate, central Mosul, in Ninewa governorate, and Fallujah, in Anbar governorate. In addition, shelling killed two civilians and wounded four others in Fallujah on 21 November. Also in Fallujah, on 26 November, an air strike reportedly hit a residential building, killing 12 civilians, including 8 children, and wounding 6 children.

56. The Task Force on Children and Armed Conflict, co-chaired by UNAMI and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), received reports of 147 incidents of violations against children during the reporting period, including 38 instances of children killed and 67 of children maimed. This represents a significant increase from the previous reporting period. In one such incident, on 26 November, eight children were killed and six wounded during a military operation in al-Halabsa village, near the city of Fallujah. Most of the children were under 10 years of age. Since the beginning of 2015, a total of 190 children have been confirmed killed and another 303 wounded as a result of the conflict in Iraq. The Task Force received information on 38 incidents of attacks on schools during the reporting period, with the majority taking place in Anbar.

57. The Task Force has also documented several cases of recruitment of children by ISIL. Of 18 boys who were reported to have joined ISIL during 2015, 6 were allegedly killed in fighting. ISIL posted pictures and videos on social media of children executing prisoners.

58. UNAMI received reports of journalists being harassed or assaulted by unknown individuals. On 28 October, a journalist was abducted and killed in the city of Basra. As pro-reform protests continued in the southern governorates of Iraq, seven protestors and a police officer were wounded on 30 October in clashes in Diwaniya, in Qadissiya governorate.

59. During the reporting period, UNAMI supported training for government security personnel on their international obligations in the conduct of counter-terrorism and counter-insurgency operations and in civilian law enforcement. UNAMI also engaged organizations and representatives of Iraq's diverse ethnic and religious minority communities to develop a set of recommendations to enhance the Government's protection of minority components, respect for their rights and reintegration of internally displaced persons. UNAMI is also developing proposals for criminal law reform to address systemic weaknesses in the administration of justice in Iraq, promote respect for due process and fair trial standards and promote access to justice for all Iraqis.

60. UNAMI continued to provide support to Iraqi institutions and civil society during the reporting period. In follow-up to the universal periodic review of Iraq conducted by the Human Rights Council in March 2015, UNAMI held consultations on 23 November in Baghdad and on 14 December in Erbil with members of the Independent High Commission for Human Rights of Iraq, the Independent Board of

Human Rights of the Kurdistan region and civil society representatives to support the development of Iraq's second national action plan on human rights.

D. Camp New Iraq and Camp Hurriya

61. UNAMI continues to monitor the humanitarian situation of the residents of Camp Hurriya. On 29 October, the Camp was the subject of a rocket attack in which 24 residents were killed and 50 others were wounded. Following the attack, my Deputy Special Representative for Political Affairs met relevant interlocutors from the Government of Iraq, as well as representatives of the residents, and called upon the Government to abide by the 2011 memorandum of understanding and ensure adequate security for the Camp's residents, while conducting an independent and thorough investigation into the attack. He also encouraged the continuation of relocations to third countries as the only durable solution to ensure residents' safety.

62. The relocation of residents from Camp Hurriya was taken up with a renewed sense of urgency in 2015. In the wake of the 29 October attack on the Camp, my Special Adviser for the Relocation of Camp Hurriya Residents Outside of Iraq, in coordination with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), mobilized efforts to arrange for 100 airline tickets to be bought by the United Nations trust fund for the relocation of Camp Hurriya residents outside Iraq in order to expedite the relocation process and meet the target of 480 relocations to Albania by the end of 2015. The targets were met successfully.

63. To date, a total of 1,118 residents have relocated outside Iraq, leaving 1,955 residents in Camp Hurriya. My Special Adviser, with the assistance of relevant stakeholders, including UNHCR, continues to seek an accelerated solution for the residents of Camp Hurriya. I am concerned that funding for the monitoring of camp activities by the United Nations and for relocation activities by UNHCR is set to expire in May 2016.

E. Humanitarian assistance, reconstruction and development

64. The humanitarian situation continued to deteriorate over the reporting period, and the conflict in Iraq has had profound humanitarian consequences. Nearly a third of Iraq's population, or 10 million people, require some form of humanitarian assistance, including 3.2 million people who have fled their homes since January 2014, around 470,000 returnees and nearly 250,000 Syrian refugees. Three million more people are living under ISIL control. Recent trends in insecurity, restrictions on movement and bureaucratic impediments in Anbar, Kirkuk and Ninewa governorates indicate that displaced persons are compelled to stay within the contested areas.

65. With conditions worsening, people are struggling to cope. At least 2 million people are entering their second year of displacement. Family savings are exhausted, increasing the demand for livelihood options, while incidents of social tension are increasing. There is an exponential deterioration in the condition of host communities, as families who have generously opened their homes to displaced relatives and neighbours are plunging rapidly into poverty. Leadership and financing by the Government of Iraq have been essential in addressing the situation. However, the massive public fiscal gap has led to a contracting social protection net and has

decreased service delivery by institutions in communities hosting displaced persons. The security situation in many areas remains fluid, triggering new displacement, with some people uprooted for the second or third time. Around 77 per cent of all displaced Iraqis (over 2.4 million) have fled Anbar and Ninewa governorates into other territories.

66. The cholera outbreak that was declared in Iraq on 15 September is on the wane. During the reporting period, 1,668 cases were confirmed, bringing the total number of confirmed cases to around 2,870 across 17 of Iraq's 18 governorates. The decrease in new cases is due to effective containment measures, efficient case management and declining temperatures. The Government of Iraq, with the support of the World Health Organization (WHO) and UNICEF, completed a cholera vaccination campaign for 232,000 refugees and internally displaced persons considered to be at high risk of contracting the illness (94 per cent of the target) in 62 camps in 13 governorates. However, poor water supply infrastructure and inadequate water coverage, particularly in rural areas, remains a key challenge. Colder weather during the reporting period brought additional hardship for displaced Iraqis. Around 400,000 people urgently need shelter assistance, and at least 780,000 people lack essential household and other life-sustaining items to mitigate the impact of the harsh winter weather. The humanitarian community started distribution of core relief items to displaced and refugee households, working also to support the efforts of the Iraqi authorities through the distribution of kerosene fuel supplies, cash assistance and shelter upgrades.

67. During the reporting period, more than 100 humanitarian partners responded across the country. Protection monitoring teams reached around 140,000 people, and 30,000 women and girls accessed women's shelters. Around 1.5 million displaced persons and 100,000 refugees were provided with food assistance by the World Food Programme (WFP) and food security partners. More than 2.8 million displaced persons were provided with continued access to safe water, while more than 498,000 displaced individuals were provided with access to permanent sanitation facilities. A total of 94,380 Syrian refugees in 10 camps benefited from continued access to water, sanitation and hygiene services. From the start of the new school year in September 2015, more than 79,000 newly enrolled displaced children benefited from improved access to education through new schools built in coordination with the Ministry of Education. UNICEF supported the construction of 45 schools across Iraq in 2015, with 152 extra classrooms to cater for the increase in students. At the start of the new academic year, 44,000 out of a total of 78,000 refugee children were receiving education. UNICEF and WFP, in partnership with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the International Organization for Migration and nine non-governmental organizations, delivered combined life-saving assistance through the rapid response mechanism to around 30,000 recently displaced and vulnerable people. In December, WFP distributed food supplied by the Government to 70,000 people in the ISIL-besieged towns of Haditha and al-Baghdadi in Anbar. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations provided 500 tons of wheat seeds and fertilizers to 10,000 of the most vulnerable people in newly liberated areas to enable farmers to increase food availability and generate income.

68. With the support of WHO and health cluster partners, 299,382 Iraqis were provided with basic health-care services, including 8,597 people who received specialized referral services. UNFPA ensured the provision of reproductive health-

care equipment and supplies to 127 maternity units, general hospitals and primary health-care units. Health partners activated critical services in hard-to-reach areas in Salah al-Din and newly established camps in Kirkuk through 13 mobile units and teams. UNHCR also opened a camp in Kirkuk, providing shelter to 1,600 families.

69. The return of displaced families to areas liberated from ISIL occupation continues to be limited. The Mine Action Service conducted threat assessments and surveys of areas contaminated by explosive hazards in 10 priority locations, including retaken areas, to enable the safe and voluntary return of displaced persons, and established coordination mechanisms to reinforce national capacities for assessing and mitigating explosive threats in southern and central Iraq and in the Kurdistan region of Iraq.

70. During the reporting period, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), through the Funding Facility for Immediate Stabilization and with the support of 14 international donors, continued to support efforts by the Government of Iraq to stabilize newly liberated areas by restoring the delivery of basic services, jump-starting the local economy and promoting community reconciliation. Several projects in Tikrit district have been completed, directly benefiting 65,000 people with potable water from three rehabilitated pumping stations and treatment plants; 30,000 people with ambulance services and rebuilt primary health-care centres; 20,000 people with electricity from new mobile grids; thousands of children with rehabilitated schools; thousands of people with a refurbished police station; and hundreds of young people paid to remove rubble and waste, upgrade public facilities, paint public buildings and walls and clean Tikrit University. UNDP has expanded its support to other districts in Salah al-Din, Ninewa, Diyala and Sinjar governorates; in Anbar, it is supporting the Government of Iraq in the imminent reconstruction of Ramadi through the preparation of a comprehensive stabilization strategy. In its concern about the deferred maintenance of the Mosul Dam, the United Nations is working with the Government of Iraq and other interested parties to accelerate arrangements for needed repairs.

71. In support of the mandate of UNAMI to advance national reconciliation, reforms and human rights, UNDP provided technical advice for the development of a community reconciliation strategic framework that proposes programmatic elements for community and national reconciliation in Iraq. UNDP also assisted the Government of Iraq in finalizing its national security strategy, which centralizes the concept of human security, promotes inclusivity and equality and will support the Government's efforts in developing a security sector reform plan. The United Nations Office for Project Services supported the creation and furnishing of a training and documentation centre for the Independent High Commission for Human Rights of Iraq, facilitated the development of a database and document management system and provided the necessary training to staff. UNICEF supported the finalization of the national child protection policy in December 2015, which aims to address gaps in existing legislation, service delivery and child protection issues that affect marginalized and disadvantaged children.

72. As part of efforts to build capacity for the sustainable development of Iraq, the International Organization for Migration delivered training on community policing, benefiting 20 communities, and also trained 42 government officials and members of civil society on the issues of migration, trafficking and humanitarian border management. UNFPA delivered training on reproductive health-care services to

staff, covering 91 beneficiaries, and on statistics management to 31 central and Kurdistan statistics offices. UNESCO trained Ministry of Education staff on their roles, responsibilities and duties to begin the establishment of the Iraqi national curricula centre. To strengthen immunization services on a long-term basis, WHO provided technical support to transition from trivalent to bivalent oral polio vaccines.

73. In the wake of the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, held in Paris, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) launched three programmes in Baghdad on 24 December: a national programme to combat sand and dust storms; a national programme of action to combat desertification; and the first national communication report on climate change. UNEP continued to assist the Government of Iraq in developing a management plan to integrate the cultural and natural components of the Iraqi marshlands in support of their nomination as a World Heritage Site. UNESCO continued to provide technical and managerial capacity in integrated groundwater resources management to safeguard essential access to potable water.

F. Security and operational issues

74. In follow-up to the strategic assessment mission conducted in April 2015, UNAMI stepped up its efforts to enhance the strategic coherence of the work of the United Nations in Iraq. My Special Representative established an inter-agency team to conceptualize an integrated strategic framework for the United Nations in Iraq in 2016.

75. The continued absence of a status of mission agreement between Iraq and the United Nations continues to hamper the effectiveness of United Nations operations. United Nations personnel continue to work and conduct missions in Iraq under challenging circumstances in a volatile security environment. The United Nations security management system continues to implement significant risk mitigation measures, in coordination and cooperation with relevant Iraqi government security agencies in support of United Nations activities. A locally recruited UNHCR staff member who had been abducted on 26 September was released on 3 October as a result of the efforts of the Iraqi security forces. Regrettably, no progress has been made with regard to the UNAMI staff member abducted on 26 April in Diyala governorate.

76. The limited availability of secure accommodation in Baghdad for United Nations international staff continues. Of the additional 99 approved units, 10 are likely to be completed by February and by August 2016, and the remaining 79 by the end of February 2017. UNAMI also continues to provide logistical and administrative support to the United Nations country team to conduct its programmes and operations countrywide on a cost-reimbursable basis.

IV. Observations

77. I welcome the efforts of the Government of Iraq to address the myriad challenges facing Iraq. Commendable resolve has been demonstrated by the

Government and people of Iraq in the fight against ISIL, whose radical and sectarian ideology continues to pose a threat to international peace and security. I congratulate the Iraqi security forces for demonstrating through their victories over ISIL in Sinjar and in central parts of Ramadi that terrorism can be defeated through coordinated efforts and unity of purpose in the pursuit of shared goals and objectives.

78. I thank all members of the international community for complementing this effort. I reiterate the importance that all Member States and partners supporting Iraq in the fight against ISIL do so in a manner that is in line with the Charter of the United Nations and the Constitution of Iraq and respect the country's national sovereignty and territorial integrity at all times. I urge Turkey and Iraq to reach a sustainable resolution to the issue of the Turkish military presence in Bashiqa camp in Iraq through bilateral dialogue.

79. The Government of Iraq, in response to the expressed will of the Iraqi people, has pursued reforms to fight corruption and to strengthen public sector efficiency and accountability. I urge that these efforts be accelerated on the basis of collaboration, compromise and consultation between the branches of government, in particular between the executive and the legislature. I urge all political actors in Iraq to support the Prime Minister's reform agenda by placing national interest above all other considerations.

80. Reform measures must be implemented in a way that is meaningful to the public and be complemented by efforts to improve public service delivery and diversify the economy. This would not only create conditions for good governance, but would also stimulate economic growth and job creation. The people of Iraq continue to make their voices heard peacefully in weekly protests, and there must be a response to these calls.

81. Tangible steps to promote reconciliation should include amendments to or the adoption of legislation, such as the justice and accountability law, the national guard law and the general amnesty law, all of which await passage. Legal provisions must be put in place to prohibit hate speech, protect minority components and create a culture of peaceful coexistence and mutual acceptance. In this regard, I am concerned about the potential impact of the proposed national identity law on the protection and promotion of pluralism and diversity in Iraq.

82. I welcome the steps taken by the three presidencies to enhance the national reconciliation agenda, and I encourage them to accelerate implementation of the agenda. Intercommunal clashes during the reporting period in Salah al-Din and Ninewa, in areas recently freed from ISIL, highlight the need for careful operational planning and urgent progress in intercommunal reconciliation in those areas.

83. I condemn in the strongest possible terms the continuous killing, kidnapping, rape and torture of Iraqis by ISIL. I strongly condemn the suicide attacks that indiscriminately kill and maim civilians and children on a regular basis, and I urge the Government of Iraq to do all it can to bring those responsible to justice.

84. I urge the Government of Iraq to implement clear action plans, policies and legislation that promote women's empowerment, including the national action plan on women, peace and security. Gender-based violence regrettably continues to occur frequently and is also having a major impact on girls' access to education.

85. Conflict, violence and displacement have adversely affected children's education in Iraq; almost 2 million Iraqi children are currently out of school. As displacement increases, children are more exposed to grave violations, miss out on foundational years of schooling and feel increasingly desperate and disempowered. The protection of children and investment in their future needs to be a priority to achieve peace and security in Iraq.

86. I remind all parties engaged in the fight against ISIL that military operations must be conducted with the utmost care to avoid civilian casualties and in full respect of fundamental human rights principles and humanitarian law. Regrettably, in areas retaken from ISIL, there have been reports of arbitrary arrests, killings, destruction of property, efforts to forcibly change demographic composition and retaliatory violence. To address these violations and ensure that internally displaced persons can return safely to their places of origin, the Government of Iraq must ensure that State authority and the rule of law are restored as quickly as possible to the areas concerned. I also strongly urge the Government of Iraq to make every effort to secure the release of the UNAMI staff member abducted on 26 April.

87. I encourage the Government of Iraq to ensure that funding is available to support the prospective reconstruction efforts of the areas previously held by ISIL. UNDP will be leading efforts based on the principles of the new resilience agenda for the Middle East to help people in Iraq to cope with the crisis, recover and become strong enough to deal with future exigencies. I would like to thank Germany, Italy, Norway and Sweden for their recent generous donations in support of stabilization efforts.

88. I condemn the heinous attack on Camp Hurriya on 29 October. I call upon the Government of Iraq to bring the perpetrators to justice, and I reiterate the Government's responsibility to ensure the safety and security of the Camp's residents. I note that more than 1,000 residents have been relocated outside Iraq under the auspices of the United Nations since the signing of the memorandum of understanding in 2011, and I call upon the Government and international stakeholders to work closely with my Special Adviser for the Relocation of Camp Hurriya Residents Outside of Iraq to accelerate the relocation of the residents.

89. Humanitarian response efforts in Iraq remain underfunded. The $498 million appeal to address the humanitarian situation during the second half of 2015 generated less than 50 per cent of the target, forcing humanitarian partners to close life-saving programmes. In recognition of the enormous security, operational, capacity and funding constraints they are facing, humanitarian partners are requesting $861 million for the 2016 humanitarian response plan to help to ensure that the most vulnerable people receive the assistance they need. I urge that this appeal, which reflects the absolute minimum required to help Iraqis to survive the crisis, be adequately resourced as soon as possible to meet growing needs and prevent further deterioration of the humanitarian crisis in Iraq, given its impact on the security of Iraq, the region and beyond and the continued high levels of migration.

90. Lastly, I wish to extend my appreciation to my Special Representative, Ján Kubiš, and the staff of the United Nations in Iraq for their continued efforts in assisting the Government and people of Iraq. I trust that international partners, including Iraq's neighbours, will continue to support my Special Representative in the implementation of his mandate.

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Identical letters dated 26 January 2016 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

On instructions from my Government, I should like to convey to you the position of the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic regarding the twenty-third report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of Security Council resolutions 2139 (2014), 2165 (2014), 2191 (2014) and 2258 (2015) (S/2016/60).

The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic reaffirms the positions that it has previously communicated in its identical letters addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council responding to the reports of the Secretary-General on the implementation of Security Council resolutions 2139 (2014), 2165 (2014), 2191 (2014) and 2258 (2015). In its current response, it would also like to stress the following points:

1. The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic reiterates that it is committed to cooperating with United Nations agencies and international organizations operating in Syria to deliver humanitarian assistance, without discrimination, to civilian beneficiaries who have been affected by the crisis in all parts of Syria, in keeping with its constitutional obligations and with General Assembly resolution 46/182. The Syrian Government also reaffirms that it stands ready to cooperate and coordinate with the United Nations, in the spirit of the relevant Security Council resolutions, in order to remove the obstacles and challenges to the operation of humanitarian aid convoys, while taking into account the need to ensure the security and safety of humanitarian workers and to make certain that aid reaches civilian beneficiaries who have been affected by the crisis instead of falling into the hands of terrorists. The Syrian Government also reiterates that the successful delivery of humanitarian assistance depends above all on the United Nations cooperating with the Syrian Government. The United Nations must display greater transparency and avoid politicizing the high-minded aspirations of humanitarian work.

2. The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic again denounces efforts by the report's authors to attribute successes in humanitarian aid delivery in 2015 to the United Nations alone without giving due credit to the Syrian Government. One might well ask if the United Nations would have been able to deliver humanitarian assistance to millions of civilians in most of the country's governorates without extensive cooperation from the Syrian Government and the facilities it has provided to the United Nations and other international organizations at the present time and

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over the past few years. The Syrian Government's cooperation has been the cornerstone of the delivery of humanitarian assistance to civilian beneficiaries who have been affected by the crisis. The logistical facilities and protection provided by the Government remain the foundation of all successful delivery efforts. The best evidence of that is the figures supplied in paragraphs 32 to 34 of the latest report, which show that the World Food Programme (WFP) has been able to deliver assistance through the Nusaybin crossing on a monthly basis despite numerous attempts by the Turkish Government to obstruct that operation. The cooperation of the Syrian Government with the United Nations throughout the years of crisis is what has allowed the United Nations to implement previous humanitarian response plans. It is what made possible agreement on the 2016 Humanitarian Response Plan in the face of politicization and a funding shortfall caused by donors' failure to fulfil their pledges.

3. The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic is surprised that the Secretariat should persist in the same politicized approaches that it has adopted since it began preparing these monthly reports in spite of all the new developments that have emerged over the course of the Syrian crisis. The impression gained by the reader is that the Secretariat insists on reliving past events that took place in the years 2013 and 2014. It is preposterous that the Secretariat continues to rely on undocumented information, including that provided by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCR). It cites dubious reports that are devoid of truth and come from persons and parties with no credibility, thereby kowtowing to the whims of intelligence agencies hostile to Syria. Adopting the agendas of certain States and applying a double standard to human rights questions undermines the mandate and functions of UNHCR. Is it not shameful that paragraphs 5, 6 and 17 of this report cite events and allegations that it was not possible to verify? How is that not politicization? It is clear that the objective of UNHCR is nothing more than to hurl accusations at the Syrian Government and its allies.

4. The claim put forward in paragraph 6 about the use of chemical weapons is intended solely to portray the Syrian Government as a violator of its international obligations. The Government categorically denies that claim which, in its view, supports and defends the terrorists. If the authors truly want to preserve international peace and security, they should take a more factual approach that steers clear of politicization and bias in favour of the armed terrorist groups. They should adhere to the guiding principles for humanitarian work annexed to General Assembly resolution 46/182. That is particularly true now, nearly five years after the onset of the Syrian crisis, which all and sundry are aware has its roots in terrorism that has been covertly and overtly supported primarily by Saudi Arabia, Turkey and Qatar, which are in turn backed by Western States that are hostile to Syria and bent on infringing on its sovereignty and independence.

5. The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic once again rejects the Secretariat's continued use of the terms "non-State armed opposition groups" or "rebels" to describe the terrorist groups. Those terms appear in paragraphs 6, 7, 9 to 12 and 15 of the current report, and are designed to sidestep the relevant Security Council counter-terrorism resolutions and appease certain Member States of the United Nations. The Syrian Government reiterates that such terms and designations have no firm basis in international law or international agreements, and there is no consensus about their meaning among the Member States. Furthermore, the Syrian Government rejects the Secretariat's focus on the Islamic State in Iraq and the

Levant (ISIL) terrorist organization to the exclusion of the Nusrah Front, which is on the Security Council's list of terrorist individuals, organizations, institutions and entities.

6. The Syrian Government reiterates its firm rejection of the aspersions cast by the Secretariat in paragraph 16 on efforts by the Russian Federation to assist the Syrian State in its war against terrorism. At the request of the Syrian Government, the Russian Air Force has provided air cover in support of the Syrian Arab Army's operations to liberate Syrian areas from the armed terrorist groups. The Syrian Government also strongly rejects the Secretariat's attempts to equate the counter-terrorism efforts of the Syrian Arab Armed Forces and the Russian Air Force with the air bombardment of infrastructure, services, gas and oil facilities being carried out by the so-called United States-led coalition forces. That approach confers legitimacy on the coalition's activities, which violate the Charter of the United Nations under the pretext of, inter alia, fighting the ISIL terrorist organization. The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic condemns the Secretariat's conduct and rejects all of the allegations levelled at the Syrian-Russian counter-terrorism efforts. It is regrettable that the authors should choose to rely on the same biased and politicized sources of information used to support the agendas of the Western States that are supporting the terrorism and are upset by the success of joint Syrian-Russian efforts in combating it. The authors' claim that Syrian-Russian military operations are targeting civilians is devoid of truth. The Syrian Government affirms that all operations have been and continue to be directed against the terrorist groups, their members and their supply lines.

7. The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic categorically rejects the claims in paragraph 22 of the report about airstrikes hitting a number of locations in Idlib city, and confirms that it is in compliance with the Four Towns ceasefire agreement covering Zabadani, Madaya, Fu'ah and Kafraya and surrounding areas.

8. Since the beginning of the crisis, which was precipitated by foreign-sponsored terrorism and has been going on for close to five years, the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic has worked for a peaceful resolution that takes into account the initiation of a dialogue among Syrians under Syrian leadership with a view to achieving the aspirations of the Syrian people in parallel with continuing to fight terrorism. Today, on the eve of the Geneva III conference, the Security Council should call on States that support and finance armed terrorist groups to desist from providing any kind of support and financing to such groups, in implementation of the relevant Security Council resolutions on combating terrorism and terrorist financing, particularly resolutions 2170 (2014), 2178 (2014), 2199 (2015) and 2253 (2015).

9. The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic reiterates its position that cross-border assistance is futile, and condemns once more the lack of transparency with which the authors have chosen to cover that topic. The notifications being sent to the Syrian Government are riddled with inaccurate figures, information, numbers of beneficiaries and particulars on which parties collect aid to distribute it to civilian recipients. As a result, the Syrian Government has no way of knowing how, and by whom, humanitarian assistance is being distributed. What is certain is that cross-border assistance is finding its way into the hands of the armed terrorists, or they are appropriating it, distributing some of it to their members and selling the rest to civilians at exorbitant prices on the black market. In that regard, we wish to underscore that the Turkish regime's intelligence apparatus is using cross-border

humanitarian assistance convoys to smuggle in weapons for the armed terrorist groups that serve as its proxies.

10. The Syrian Government reiterates its position that the United Nations is unable to deliver humanitarian assistance to hotspots. The Government has made it clear previously that the failure of the United Nations to act on more than half of the authorizations that it was granted to operate joint convoys to deliver assistance to hotspots in April and June 2015 remains the primary reason why it has failed to reach other areas. Other reasons include the lack of transparency the United Nations demonstrated at the time in its dealings with the Government concerning the operation of the convoys, and the Organization's failure to inform the Government of its difficulties in attempting to act on the authorizations so that those difficulties could have been resolved.

11. The fact that the United Nations is not sending joint convoys to certain areas does not mean that other international organizations are not reaching those areas. The Syrian Government is surprised by the hue and cry over assistance convoys, given that paragraphs 35, 36, 39 and 55 to 57 of the Secretary-General's current report show that United Nations convoys — joint or otherwise — have reached many hotspots. Those convoys have been operated with facilities and cooperation provided by the Syrian Government. In that regard, we draw attention to the fact that the Syrian Government granted approval to a number of United Nations requests to send assistance convoys to Bludan, Mu'addamiyah and Tall in Rif Dimashq governorate and Harbnafsah, Muhradah, Suqaylibiyah, Salamiyah and Saburah in Hama governorate. The Syrian Government stresses that it continues to cooperate and coordinate with United Nations agencies and such other international organizations as the International Committee of the Red Cross and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies to deliver humanitarian assistance to its nationals and others directly affected by the crisis, or some 6 million beneficiaries monthly (paragraph 64). It also continues to provide the necessary facilities to deliver humanitarian assistance from within Syria to affected civilians in all parts of Syria without discrimination. The Syrian Government stresses that the obstacles to humanitarian assistance efforts and the delivery of humanitarian assistance to hotspots are caused by armed terrorist groups that have deployed over a number of areas and have support from the region and beyond.

12. The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic cannot condone the authors' lack of objectivity regarding the suffering of Syrians affected by the crisis and by terrorism supported by Turkey, Saudi Arabia and Qatar. The report offers dry recitations of the armed terrorist groups' suicide bombings and deliberate mortar and rocket attacks on civilians in residential neighbourhoods and schools in Aleppo, Homs, Damascus, Rif Dimashq and Hasakah without designating those attacks as terrorist acts. The authors also discriminate among Syrians by focusing on the suffering of Syrians in Madaya while failing to mention the suffering of their brothers in Dayr al-Zawr, Raqqah, Kafraya and Fu'ah; by leaving out mention of the besieged towns of Nubul and Zahra'; and by describing members of armed terrorist groups located in Darayya as civilians. That stance serves the agendas of certain Arab, regional and Western States that are bent on destroying Syria and its people.

13. The vast majority of requests for entry and residence visas for the Syrian Arab Republic have received a positive response. More than 97 per cent of such requests had been approved as of 30 November 2015. There was only one case in which the

United Nations was informed that a visa request had been declined. The meaningless talk of bureaucracy shows that certain United Nations officials have no respect for the procedures that States have adopted in order to handle matters that are important, indeed necessary, for the maintenance of their sovereignty and security. We feel compelled to point out that decisions on requests for visas by certain diplomats to carry out their tasks at permanent missions to United Nations Headquarters in New York sometimes take several months.

14. The Syrian Government reiterates that it is committed to providing the necessary facilities for the work of foreign non-governmental organizations operating in Syria. Recently, with a view to enhancing the activities of such organizations intended to serve Syrians affected by the crisis, it has responded to a number of proposals submitted by the Resident Coordinator for United Nations activities, and the Resident Coordinator has been so informed.

15. Lastly, we wish to address the Secretary-General's comments regarding the ramifications of the continued crisis in Syria, the suffering inflicted on civilians as a result, and the waves of displaced persons who are leaving Syria. The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic reiterates that before the crisis, Syria and its citizens enjoyed security, stability and dignity. However, certain States and their terrorist proxies began to undermine stability and security in Syria, with States in the region and beyond supporting the terrorists with weapons, materiel, ammunition, criminals, and intelligence and logistical support. Syrians are suffering because of terrorism. They are being criminally and indiscriminately bombarded by armed terrorist groups — referred to in the report as "armed non-State opposition groups" — that are targeting defenceless residential areas and the economic and service infrastructure. The groups are using various forms of projectiles that have indiscriminate effects, including rockets, "hellfire" cannons, explosive gas cylinders and other locally made missiles. They also use advanced weapons such as explosive missiles and TOW missiles, the sources of which are well known to all.

16. The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic will continue to fulfil its duty towards its citizens in full respect for its constitutional responsibilities, in order to meet the aspirations of the Syrian people.

17. I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annexes issued as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Mounzer **Mounzer**
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

Annex I to the identical letters dated 26 January 2016 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

Indiscriminate attacks and crimes committed by ISIL, the Nusrah Front, the Free Army, the Army of Islam, the Army of Conquest and other armed terrorist groups ignored by the authors of the report

- In the period from 21 November to 21 December 2015, terrorists killed 190 civilians, including 42 children, and injured 524 civilians, including 109 children, across the governorates of Syria, not including Raqqah, Idlib and Dayr al-Zawr.
- On 3 December 2015, armed terrorist groups belonging to the Army of Islam and the Rahman Corps indiscriminately fired mortar shells and locally made missiles at residential areas in the city of Damascus, including Baghdad street, the Faculty of Civil Engineering, the Faculty of Sciences and Rukn al-Din. Two women were killed and 15 civilians were injured. In Rif Dimashq, the Nusrah Front fired mortar shells and locally made missiles at the villages of Jandal and Bqa'sim in Qatana, killing four civilians and injuring two others.
- On 3 December 2015, in the countryside of Aleppo governorate, armed terrorist groups belonging to the terrorist group Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) in the villages of Subayhah and Balat fired rockets at the districts of Safirah and Tall Urun, killing two children and injuring six civilians.
- On 4 December 2015, in Dar'a governorate, armed terrorist groups belonging to the Nusrah Front fired mortar shells and rockets at the village of Qaytah, killing three civilians. On 5 December, they fired mortar shells and rockets from the town of Inkhil at the town of Sanamayn, killing four civilians and injuring one other.
- On 8 December 2015, armed terrorist groups belonging to the so-called Nusrah Front, the Nur al-Din al-Zanki battalion, the Islamic Front, Liwa' al-Tawhid, the Badr Martyrs Brigade, the Muhajirin Brigade and Northern Shield located in the Bani Zayd neighbourhood fired bullets, mortar shells and gas cylinder missiles towards residential neighbourhoods of Aleppo city, including Khalidiyah, Mogambo, Suryan al-Qadimah, the Faculty of Literature and Shahba'). Twelve civilians were killed and 62 others were injured, including women and children. Extensive material damage was also caused. On 10 December, the same terrorist groups fired mortar shells, gas cylinder missiles and rockets at residential areas including Nile Street, Ashrafiyah and Hamdaniyah, killing 11 civilians, injuring 72 others and causing material damage.
- On 10 December 2015, in Hasakah governorate, three suicide bombers detonated three vans in the town of Tall Tamr, killing 28 civilians and injuring 125, most of them women and children. The blast sites sustained extensive material damage. In the village of Nusayrat, a car bomb killed one civilian and injured two others.

- On 12 December 2015, armed terrorist groups belonging to the Nusrah Front organization in Jabal al-Zawiyah, in Idlib, fired rockets at Ayn Sulaymu and Jurin, killing and injuring two women.

- On 13 December 2015, the terrorist organization ISIL detonated a booby-trapped van in the Zahra' neighbourhood of Homs city, killing 15 civilians, injuring 109 others and causing extensive material damage.

- On 13 and 14 December 2015, armed terrorist groups belonging to the Army of Islam and the Rahman Corps located in the Jawbar quarter fired mortar shells and locally made missiles at residential neighbourhoods of Damascus city, including Hamra' street, the inside and back of the Dar al-Salam school, the Sham Hotel building, the preparatory school, Abu Rummanah, the children's hospital building, Mazra'ah, Sha'lan and Qassa'. Seven civilians were killed, 20 others were injured and material damage was caused.

- On 14 December 2015, armed terrorist groups belonging to the Army of Islam and the Nusrah Front in the agricultural areas around the towns of Harasta, Duma and Arbin fired mortar shells and locally made missiles at the residential areas of Rif Dimashq, including the Wafidin camp and the Assad residential suburb in Harasta. Eight civilians were killed, 37 others were injured and material damage was caused. On 24 December, the terrorist organizations Army of Islam and Rahman Corps fired mortar shells at the Assad suburb in Harasta, killing a girl and injuring three other children.

- On 21 December 2015, armed terrorist groups belonging to the so-called Nusrah Front, the Nur al-Din al-Zanki battalion, the Islamic Front, Liwa' al-Tawhid, the Badr Martyrs Brigade, the Muhajirin Brigade and Northern Shield located in the town of Bani Zayd fired gas cylinder missiles at the Salah al-Din and Nile street areas of Aleppo city. Two women were killed and five civilians were injured. On 22 December, two civilians were killed and an adult and child were injured in the Halab al-Jadidah quarter.

- On 22 December 2015, armed terrorist groups belonging to the so-called Nusrah Front, the Army of Conquest and Ahrar al-Sham in the town of Kafr Zayta and in Wadi al-Anz fired rockets at the towns of Suqaylabiyah and Sahlab in Hama governorate. Two civilians were killed, 10 others were injured and material damage was caused.

- On 27 December 2015, armed terrorist groups belonging to the Army of Islam, the Nusrah Front and the Rahman Corps located in the parks around the towns of Harasta, Duma and Arbin fired mortar shells at residential areas in Rif Dimashq, including the Wafidin camp and the Assad residential suburb in Harasta. Nine civilians were killed, 17 others were injured and material damage was caused.

- On 27 December 2015, armed terrorist groups belonging to the so-called Nusrah Front located in the village of Lataminah, district of Muhradah, fired rockets at the village of Qumhanah in Hama governorate. A girl was killed, nine civilians were injured and material damage was caused.

- On 27 December 2015, a missile left behind by armed terrorist groups exploded in the rubbish dump near Tall al-Quba' adjacent to the Jurah

neighbourhood of the town of Khan Arnabah, Qunaytirah governorate. A girl was killed and four other children were injured.

- On 26 December 2015, the terrorist organization ISIL carried out two successive suicide bombings in the Zahra' residential neighbourhood of Homs city, Homs governorate, claiming more than 24 lives and over one hundred injuries, some of them serious.

Annex II to the identical letters dated 26 January 2016 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

Examples of humanitarian assistance that was delivered in December 2015 thanks to the facilitation provided by the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations and other international organizations, in cooperation with the Syrian Arab Red Crescent. Also listed is assistance delivered by the Syrian Arab Red Crescent

- The Syrian Arab Red Crescent delivered humanitarian aid (food and non-food aid and medical assistance), provided from inside Syrian territory by United Nations organizations, to various governorates, including Rif Dimashq, Qunaytirah, Hasakah, Aleppo and Dar'a, but not to Raqqah or Dayr al-Zawr governorates. Some 1,620,990 Syrian beneficiaries (324,198 families) received food parcels provided by the World Food Programme (WFP) through the Syrian Arab Red Crescent. Some 978,695 beneficiaries (195,739 families) received food parcels provided by the United Nations through non-governmental organizations. The total number of the beneficiaries of United Nations assistance distributed from inside Syrian territory thus stands at 2,599,685 (519,937 families). The above-mentioned assistance was distributed to the governorates as follows: 61,454 parcels in Rif Dimashq; 22,841 parcels in Dar'a and its countryside; 8,777 parcels in Qunaytirah; 52,428 parcels in Aleppo and its countryside; 346 parcels in Hasakah; 31,758 parcels in Hama and its countryside; and 68,332 parcels in Homs and its countryside.

- The Syrian Arab Red Crescent delivered humanitarian aid provided by the International Committee of the Red Cross from inside Syrian territory to most governorates, including Rif Dimashq, Idlib, Dar'a, Qunaytirah, Aleppo and Hama. A total of 102,776 food parcels were delivered, in addition to 49,483 parcels of canned food. An additional 15,636 parcels provided by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies were distributed in Homs, Damascus and Aleppo governorates.

- The Syrian Arab Red Crescent delivered humanitarian aid (food and non-food aid and medical assistance) provided by United Nations entities and foreign non-governmental organizations operating in Syria to Aleppo, Hasakah, Rif Dimashq, Dar'a, Qunaytirah, Damascus, Homs, Hama, Suwayda', Tartus and Ladhiqiyah governorates, benefiting hundreds of thousands of families.

- The Syrian Government renewed its approval for WFP to bring humanitarian assistance through the Nusaybin crossing on the Syrian-Turkish border until the end of 2015 in order to allow the food rations allocated for October and November 2015 to be brought in. As a result, 48,484 food rations (20 tons of peanut butter and 32,000 sacks of flour) were distributed to beneficiaries in Hasakah governorate in October and 48,434 food rations (20 tons of peanut butter) in November.

United Nations S/2016/79

Security Council

Distr.: General
28 January 2016

Original: English

Identical letters dated 26 January 2016 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to attach herewith identical letters dated 25 January 2016 from the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council (see annex).

It would be highly appreciated if the present letter and its annex were circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Mounzer **Mounzer**
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

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Annex to the identical letters dated 26 January 2016 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

[Original: Arabic]

Identical letters dated 25 January 2016 from the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

On instructions from my country's Government, I should like to inform you that the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic rejects the spurious claims set out in the letter dated 6 January 2016 from the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Qatari regime addressed to the President of the Security Council. Those claims are part of the Minister's miserable efforts to cover up the direct support that the Qatari regime has consistently provided to the armed terrorist groups, so that they can attack the security and stability of the State and terrorize its people.

It is risible that the representative of the Qatari regime should transmit letters that are full of obfuscation and lies regarding Syria in order to turn the facts inside out. The claim that the Syrian Government is starving its people is particularly ludicrous, because everyone is now aware of the role of the Qatari regime in the killing of Syrian citizens and of its support for terrorism.

For more than four years, the Qatari regime has provided every form of support to armed terrorist groups in Syria. Those groups have invaded the peaceful cities and villages of Syria and besieged them from within, killing peaceable civilians and destroying public and private property. They have forced civilians to flee to areas that are controlled by the State or to seek refuge in other States, in order to save their lives and the lives of their families. As for those civilians who have been unable to do that, the terrorists have used them as human shields and committed the most horrific crimes against them, including depriving them of food and medicine. Moreover, this regime paid cash ransoms to Nusrah Front terrorists and other terrorist organizations for the release of members of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force and nuns who had been abducted from the city of Ma'lulah. Such conduct clearly violates Security Council resolutions 2133 (2014), 2199 (2015) and 2253 (2015).

The Qatari regime has also strived to undermine any effort to find a peaceful solution to the Syrian crisis by providing direct support to terrorist groups, including the Nusrah Front, which is affiliated with Al-Qaida. The Qatari regime has attempted in vain to whitewash the record of the Nusrah Front and make it appear as though it were the moderate opposition by marshalling all of its media resources to promote that organization. The *Al-Jazeera* channel, which broadcasts its programmes from Doha, hosted Abu Mahmud al-Jawlani, the amir of the so-called Nusrah Front, an organization that appears in the lists of the Security Council, and attempted to present him as the leader of a moderate opposition group that calls for openness and tolerance. The Qatari channel *Al-Jazeera* is the only news channel that conducted several exclusive television interviews with Osama bin Laden and Ayman al-Zawahiri, the leaders of Al-Qaida. Not content with that, the Qatari regime's Minister for Foreign Affairs, in an interview that appeared in the 11 May 2015 edition of the

French newspaper *Le Monde*, said that cooperation with the Nusrah Front and its affiliated groups was an unavoidable reality. This is a clear admission of the Qatari regime's support for that terrorist organization and a flagrant violation of the resolutions of the Security Council, including resolutions 1373 (2001), 1624 (2005) and 2170 (2014).

No one cares more for the Syrian people than the Syrian Government. Neither Qatar nor any other enemy of the Syrian people can surpass it in that regard, including with respect to the delivery of assistance to hot spots controlled by armed terrorist groups. The Syrian Government is making tangible efforts to deliver humanitarian assistance to all persons in need in all areas, without discrimination, including Madaya. The Qatari regime has been attempting to mislead the public about the situation in that city.

Those who are desirous of helping persons who are in need in Syria should, above all, stop supporting terrorist groups in word and deed and should implement the Security Council resolutions on counter-terrorism. There was no humanitarian suffering in a number of Syrian regions until the arrival of terrorist groups that are supported by several well-known regimes, led by the Al Thani regime of Qatar. That regime's sponsorship of terrorism has led to the starvation of large segments of the Syrian people. That same regime has also misled the Security Council and the public at the international level with regard to the issue of humanitarian assistance.

The call of the Qatari regime's representative to implement Security Council resolutions and apply the principle of accountability is risible. The primary cause of the ongoing suffering of Syrians and the development and worsening of the humanitarian crisis has been the Qatari regime's failure to comply with the resolutions of the Security Council on counter-terrorism, including resolutions 2170 (2014), 2178 (2014), 2199 (2015) and 2253 (2015); its continuing violation of those resolutions through its support of terrorism and its use of terrorism as a foreign policy tool; and the lack of a clear means of holding it accountable for its violations of those resolutions.

The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic calls on the Security Council to put an end to the protection being provide by certain States to the corrupt Qatari regime. It also calls on the Council to take action immediately against that regime for its support of armed terrorist groups in Syria, in accordance with the Security Council resolutions on counter-terrorism, including resolution 2253 (2015).

I should be grateful if the present letter could be issued as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Bashar **Ja'afari**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

United Nations S/2016/80

Security Council

Distr.: General
28 January 2016
English
Original: Arabic

Identical letters dated 26 January 2016 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

On instructions from my Government, I wish to inform you of two bloody terrorist bombings that took place on the morning of Tuesday, 26 January 2016 in the residential neighbourhood of Zahra', in the city of Homs.

On Tuesday morning, as the third Geneva conference to make progress towards a political solution among Syrians to the crisis in Syria approached, armed terrorist groups detonated a car bomb on Sittin street in the Zahra' neighbourhood, in Homs governorate. The attack was followed by a suicide bombing using an explosive belt. Some 24 people died and over one hundred civilians were injured, some of them seriously. Homes and infrastructure at the site were extensively damaged. Syria has informed the Security Council and the Secretary-General of numerous bombings perpetrated by the terrorist groups against that neighbourhood and its residents. Unfortunately, however, the Security Council and the Secretariat of the United Nations have shown no interest in the explosions, which have killed and wounded hundreds of children, women and old persons.

These two bloody explosions are part of a series of systematic, savage acts of terrorism carried out by armed terrorist groups in Syria. The groups are supported by well-known States in the region and beyond, which have been using the terrorists in order to serve their own petty, irresponsible political agendas. They seek to thwart efforts to find a political solution among Syrians to the crisis in Syria, which has lasted for almost five years, and to respond to the success of the national reconciliation processes in Syria. The attacks also seek to raise the profile of the armed terrorist groups, which have suffered a string of defeats. The Syrian Arab Army has achieved momentous victories on all fronts in its endeavour to combat terrorism and restore safety and security throughout Syria.

The bloody crimes and massacres committed by armed terrorist groups, including Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), the Nusrah Front, the Army of Islam, the Islamic Front, the Army of Conquest, Ahrar al-Sham and the Free Army could not have taken place without the weapons, materiel, funds and logistical support that continue to be provided by the Governments of States involved in shedding the blood of the Syrian people.

The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic stresses that the Security Council should denounce these terrorist crimes immediately and forcefully. It

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should take deterrent action against State sponsors of terrorism, which has had a destructive impact on peace and security not only in Syria but in the world as a whole. The Security Council should enforce resolutions 2170 (2014), 2178 (2014), 2199 (2015) and 2253 (2015). The bases for such action should include, in particular, respect for the principles of international law and the need to cooperate and coordinate fully with the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic in any efforts to combat terrorism; save lives; uphold the principles and values of justice, freedom and dignity; and combat the terrorists' culture of extremism, fanaticism and rejection.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter issued as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Mounzer **Mounzer**
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

United Nations S/2016/81

Security Council

Distr.: General
27 January 2016

Original: English

France: draft resolution

The Security Council,

Recalling its previous resolutions and statements on the Central African Republic (CAR), in particular resolutions 2121 (2013), 2127 (2013), 2134 (2014) 2149 (2014), 2181 (2014), 2196 (2015), 2212 (2015), 2217 (2015) as well as the Presidential Statements S/PRST/2014/28 of 18 December 2014 and S/PRST/2015/17 of 20 October 2015,

Reaffirming its strong commitment to the sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity of the CAR, and recalling the importance of the principles of non-interference, good-neighbourliness and regional cooperation,

Recalling that the Central African Republic bears the primary responsibility to protect all populations within its territory from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity,

Emphasizing that any sustainable solution to the crisis in the CAR should be CAR-owned, including the political and reconciliation process, and calling upon the Transitional Authorities to hold the legislative elections and the second round of the presidential election in a free, fair, transparent and inclusive manner, in order to end the transition by 31 March 2016, according with the agreed time frame,

Calling upon all stakeholders, including the candidates in the presidential and legislative elections, to refrain from engaging in any activity which could hamper the electoral process and strongly encouraging them to abide by the electoral code of conduct and to resolve any disputes peacefully through the established institutions and legal procedures,

Calling upon the elected authorities to urgently implement transparent and inclusive measures that allow for stabilization and reconciliation in the CAR, including to take concrete steps to restore the effective authority of the State over all of the territory of the CAR; to fight impunity by restoring administration of the judiciary and the criminal justice system, including the penitentiary system, throughout the country; to reform the CAR Armed Forces (FACA) and internal security forces in order to put in place multi-ethnic, professional, and republican security services through appropriate security sector reform processes; to carry out the disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and repatriation (DDRR) of armed groups; and to establish a functioning public financial management in order to meet the expenses related to the functioning of the State, implement early recovery plans, and revitalize the economy,

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Commending the United Nations Integrated Multidimensional Mission in the CAR (MINUSCA) and the French forces for the ongoing work to help the Transitional authorities improve the security situation; *noting also with concern*, however, that while improving, security in the CAR remains fragile,

Welcoming the work done by the European Union military advice mission based in Bangui (EUMAM-RCA), as requested by the CAR transitional authorities, in order to contribute to providing them with expert advice on reforming the CAR Armed Forces (FACA) into a multi-ethnic, professional, and republican security services,

Calling upon the transitional authorities and subsequent elected authorities of the CAR to ensure that perpetrators of violations of applicable international law, including those committed against children and women, are excluded from the CAR security and armed forces,

Welcoming the commitment of the Secretary-General to enforce strictly his zero-tolerance policy on sexual exploitation and abuse, expressing grave concern over numerous allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse reportedly committed by peacekeepers in the CAR, stressing the urgent need for troop- and police-contributing countries and MINUSCA to promptly investigate those cases in a credible and transparent manner and to hold accountable those responsible for such criminal offenses or misconduct, and further stressing the need to prevent such exploitation and abuse and to improve how these allegations are addressed,

Welcoming the United Nations Secretary-General Report of 30 November 2015 (S/2015/918) submitted pursuant to resolution 2217 (2015),

Welcoming also the midterm update and the final report (S/2015/936) of the Panel of Experts on the Central African Republic established pursuant to resolution 2127 (2013), expanded by resolution 2134 (2014) and extended pursuant to resolution 2196 (2015), and taking note of the Panel of Experts' recommendations,

Strongly condemning the upsurge of violence and instability in the Central African Republic (CAR), in particular in September and October 2015, and the threats of violence, human rights violations and abuses and international humanitarian law violations, including against women and children; the attacks against United Nations peacekeepers, international forces and humanitarian personnel; the continuous cycle of provocations and reprisals by armed groups, both inside and outside of Bangui and denial of humanitarian access, committed by armed elements, which continue to adversely affect the dire humanitarian situation faced by the civilian population and to impede humanitarian access to vulnerable populations,

Reiterating that all perpetrators of such acts must be held accountable and that some of those acts may amount to crimes under the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC), to which the CAR is a State party, *noting* in this regard the opening by the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court on 24 September 2014 of an investigation following the request of the national authorities on alleged crimes committed since 2012 and *welcoming* the ongoing cooperation by the CAR Transitional Authorities in this regard,

Stressing the urgent and imperative need to end impunity in the CAR and to bring to justice perpetrators of violations of international humanitarian law and of

violations or abuses of human rights, *underlining* in this regard the need to bolster national accountability mechanisms and to further implement without delay the 7 August 2014 Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Urgent Temporary Measures, and the law promulgated in June 2015 to establish a national Special Criminal Court to investigate and prosecute serious crimes committed in the CAR, including by recruiting the necessary local and international staff,

Emphasizing that those engaging in or providing support for acts that undermine undermining the peace, stability or security of the CAR, threatening or impeding the transition process, or the political stabilization and reconciliation process, targeting of civilians and attacking peacekeepers may meet criteria for designation under sanctions as stated in this resolution,

Expressing grave concern at the findings of the Panel of Experts' final report of 21 December 2015 (S/2015/936) that armed groups continue to destabilize the CAR and to pose a permanent threat to the peace, security and stability of the country, including through the establishment of illegitimate parallel administrations,

Expressing concern that illicit trafficking, trade, exploitation and smuggling of natural resources including gold, diamonds and wildlife has a negative impact in the economy and the development of the country, and that it continues to threaten the peace and stability of CAR,

Taking note of the Kimberley Process (KP) Administrative Decision on Resumption of Exports of Rough Diamonds from the CAR, its annexed Operational Framework, and the establishment of the KP Monitoring Team for CAR and recognizing the extraordinary efforts of the CAR transitional authorities and the KP, under the 2015 Chairmanship of Angola, to responsibly reintegrate CAR into the global diamond trade,

Noting with concern the findings of the Panel of Experts' final report that the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) remains active in the CAR, has established links to other armed groups and is generating revenues from the exploitation and trade of natural resources, including gold, diamonds and wildlife poaching,

Noting with concern the ongoing transnational criminal activity in the region, *emphasizing* the risk of the situation in the CAR providing a conducive environment for further transnational criminal activity, such as that involving arms trafficking and the use of mercenaries as well as a potential breeding ground for radical networks,

Acknowledging in this respect the important contribution the Council-mandated arms embargo can make to countering the illicit transfer of arms and related materiel in the CAR and its region, and in supporting post-conflict peacebuilding, disarmament, demobilization and reintegration and security sector reform, *recalling* its resolutions 2117 (2013), 2127 (2013) and 2220 (2015) and *expressing* grave concern at the threat to peace and security in the CAR arising from the illicit transfer, destabilizing accumulation and misuse of small arms and light weapons, and the use of such weapons against civilians affected by armed conflict,

Recalling the need for an inclusive and effective disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process (DDR) as well as repatriation and resettlement (DDRRR) in the case of foreign fighters, including children formerly associated with armed forces and groups, while respecting the need to fight impunity,

Reiterating the importance of all member States' full implementation of the measures set out in UNSCRs 2127 (2013), 2134 (2014), 2196 (2015) and this resolution, including the obligation to implement targeted sanctions against individuals and entities designated by the Sanctions Committee established pursuant to resolution 2127 (2013) and *underlining* that individuals who knowingly facilitate the travel of a listed individual in violation of the travel ban may be determined by the Committee to have met the designation criteria for sanctions,

Noting the critical importance of effective implementation of the sanctions regime, including the key role that neighbouring States, as well as regional and subregional organizations, can play in this regard and *encouraging* efforts to further enhance cooperation and implementation of the sanctions regime in all its aspects,

Noting with concern the reports that sanctioned individuals are travelling in the region in violation of the travel ban, and underlining that individuals or entities who knowingly facilitate the travel of a sanctioned individual in violation of the travel ban may be determined by the Committee to have met the designation criteria for sanctions,

Welcoming efforts by the Chair of the 2127 Sanctions Committee and the President of the Security Council to support and strengthen the implementation of the measures imposed pursuant to resolution 2196 (2015) through engagement with Member States, especially regional States, and welcoming in this regard the travel by the Chair and Committee members to the CAR in August 2015,

Determining that the situation in the CAR continues to constitute a threat to international peace and security in the region,

Acting under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations,

Arms embargo

1. *Decides* that, until 31 January 2017, all Member States shall continue to take the necessary measures to prevent the direct or indirect supply, sale or transfer to the CAR, from or through their territories or by their nationals, or using their flag vessels or aircraft, of arms and related materiel of all types, including weapons and ammunition, military vehicles and equipment, paramilitary equipment, and spare parts for the aforementioned, and technical assistance, training, financial or other assistance, related to military activities or the provision, maintenance or use of any arms and related materiel, including the provision of armed mercenary personnel whether or not originating in their territories, and decides further that this measure shall not apply to:

(a) Supplies intended solely for the support of or use by MINUSCA, the African Union-Regional Task Force (AU-RTF), and the European Union Missions and French Forces deployed in the CAR;

(b) Supplies of non-lethal equipment and provision of assistance, including operational and non-operational training to the CAR security forces, intended solely for support of or use in the CAR process of Security Sector Reform (SSR), in coordination with MINUSCA, and as notified in advance to the Committee, and requests MINUSCA to report on the contribution to SSR of this exemption, as part of its regular reports to the Council;

(c) Supplies brought into the CAR by Chadian or Sudanese forces solely for their use in international patrols of the tripartite force established on 23 May 2011 in Khartoum by the CAR, Chad and Sudan, to enhance security in the common border areas, in cooperation with MINUSCA, as approved in advance by the Committee;

(d) Supplies of non-lethal military equipment intended solely for humanitarian or protective use, and related technical assistance or training, as approved in advance by the Committee;

(e) Protective clothing, including flak jackets and military helmets, temporarily exported to the CAR by United Nations personnel, representatives of the media and humanitarian and development workers and associated personnel, for their personal use only;

(f) Supplies of small arms and other related equipment intended solely for use in international patrols providing security in the Sangha River Tri-national Protected Area to defend against poaching, smuggling of ivory and arms, and other activities contrary to the national laws of the CAR or the CAR's international legal obligations, as notified in advance to the Committee;

(g) Supplies of arms and other related lethal equipment to the CAR security forces, intended solely for support of or use in the CAR process of SSR, as approved in advance by the Committee; or

(h) Other sales or supply of arms and related materiel, or provision of assistance or personnel, as approved in advance by the Committee;

2. *Decides* to authorize all Member States to, and that all Member States shall, upon discovery of items prohibited by paragraph 1 of this resolution, seize, register and dispose (such as through destruction, rendering inoperable, storage or transferring to a State other than the originating or destination States for disposal) items the supply, sale, transfer or export of which is prohibited by paragraph 1 of this resolution and *decides* further that all Member States shall cooperate in such efforts;

3. *Reiterates its call* upon the transitional authorities, and the subsequent elected authorities, with the assistance of MINUSCA and international partners, to address the illicit transfer, destabilizing accumulation and misuse of small arms and light weapons in the CAR, and to ensure the collection and/or destruction of surplus, seized, unmarked, or illicitly held weapons and ammunition and further stresses the importance of incorporating such elements into SSR and DDRRR programmes;

4. *Strongly encourages* the CAR transitional authorities and subsequent elected authorities to increase their capacity, with the support of MINUSCA, UNMAS, and other international partners, to store and manage weapons and ammunition in their possession, including those transferred from MINUSCA stocks, according to international best practices and norms, while ensuring that the FACA and interior forces units receiving such weapons and ammunition are fully trained and vetted;

Travel ban

5. *Decides* that, until 31 January 2017, all Member States shall continue to take the necessary measures to prevent the entry into or transit through their territories of individuals designated by the Committee, provided that nothing in this paragraph shall oblige a State to refuse its own nationals entry into its territory;

6. *Decides* that the measures imposed by paragraph 5 above shall not apply:

(a) Where the Committee determines on a case-by-case basis that such travel is justified on the grounds of humanitarian need, including religious obligation;

(b) Where entry or transit is necessary for the fulfilment of a judicial process;

(c) Where the Committee determines on a case-by-case basis that an exemption would further the objectives of peace and national reconciliation in the CAR and stability in the region;

7. *Emphasizes* that violations of the travel ban can undermine the peace, stability or security of the CAR, *observes* that individuals who knowingly facilitate the travel of a listed individual in violation of the travel ban may be determined by the Committee to have met the designation criteria provided for in this resolution and *calls upon* all parties and all Member States to cooperate with the Committee as well as the Panel of Experts on the implementation of the travel ban;

Asset freeze

8. *Decides* that all Member States shall, until 31 January 2017, continue to freeze without delay all funds, other financial assets and economic resources which are on their territories, which are owned or controlled, directly or indirectly, by the individuals or entities designated by the Committee, or by individuals or entities acting on their behalf or at their direction, or by entities owned or controlled by them, and *decides further* that all Member States shall continue to ensure that any funds, financial assets or economic resources are prevented from being made available by their nationals or by any individuals or entities within their territories, to or for the benefit of the individuals or entities designated by the Committee;

9. *Decides* that the measures imposed by paragraph 8 above do not apply to funds, other financial assets or economic resources that have been determined by relevant Member States:

(a) To be necessary for basic expenses, including payment for foodstuffs, rent or mortgage, medicines and medical treatment, taxes, insurance premiums, and public utility charges or exclusively for payment of reasonable professional fees and reimbursement of incurred expenses associated with the provision of legal services in accordance with national laws, or fees or service charges, in accordance with national laws, for routine holding or maintenance of frozen funds, other financial assets and economic resources, after notification by the relevant State to the Committee of the intention to authorize, where appropriate, access to such funds, other financial assets or economic resources and in the absence of a negative decision by the Committee within five working days of such notification;

(b) To be necessary for extraordinary expenses, provided that such determination has been notified by the relevant State or Member States to the Committee and has been approved by the Committee; or

(c) To be the subject of a judicial, administrative or arbitral lien or judgment, in which case the funds, other financial assets and economic resources may be used to satisfy that lien or judgment provided that the lien or judgment was entered into prior to the date of the present resolution, is not for the benefit of a person or entity designated by the Committee, and has been notified by the relevant State or Member States to the Committee;

10. *Decides* that Member States may permit the addition to the accounts frozen pursuant to the provisions of paragraph 8 above of interests or other earnings due on those accounts or payments due under contracts, agreements or obligations that arose prior to the date on which those accounts became subject to the provisions of this resolution, provided that any such interest, other earnings and payments continue to be subject to these provisions and are frozen;

11. *Decides* that the measures in paragraph 8 above shall not prevent a designated person or entity from making payment due under a contract entered into prior to the listing of such a person or entity, provided that the relevant States have determined that the payment is not directly or indirectly received by a person or entity designated pursuant to paragraph 8 above, and after notification by the relevant States to the Committee of the intention to make or receive such payments or to authorize, where appropriate, the unfreezing of funds, other financial assets or economic resources for this purpose, 10 working days prior to such authorization;

Designation criteria

12. *Decides* that the measures contained in paragraphs 5 and 8 shall apply to the individuals and entities designated by the Committee as engaging in or providing support for acts that undermine the peace, stability or security of the CAR, including acts that threaten or impede the political transition process, or the stabilization and reconciliation process or that fuel violence;

13. *Further decides* in this regard that the measures contained in paragraphs 5 and 8 shall also apply to the individuals and entities designated by the Committee as:

(a) Acting in violation of the arms embargo established in paragraph 54 of resolution 2127 (2013) and extended by paragraph 1 of this resolution, or as having directly or indirectly supplied, sold, or transferred to armed groups or criminal networks in CAR, or as having been the recipient of arms or any related materiel, or any technical advice, training, or assistance, including financing and financial assistance, related to violent activities of armed groups or criminal networks in CAR;

(b) Involved in planning, directing, or committing acts that violate international human rights law or international humanitarian law, as applicable, or that constitute human rights abuses or violations, in the CAR, including acts involving sexual violence, targeting of civilians, ethnic- or religious-based attacks, attacks on schools and hospitals, and abduction and forced displacement;

(c) Recruiting or using children in armed conflict in the CAR, in violation of applicable international law;

(d) Providing support for armed groups or criminal networks through the illicit exploitation or trade of natural resources, including diamonds, gold, wildlife as well as wildlife products in or from the CAR;

(e) Obstructing the delivery of humanitarian assistance to CAR, or access to, or distribution of, humanitarian assistance in CAR;

(f) Involved in planning, directing, sponsoring, or conducting attacks against UN missions or international security presences, including MINUSCA, the European Union Missions and French operations which support them;

(g) Being leaders of an entity that the Committee has designated pursuant to paragraphs 36 or 37 of resolution 2134 (2014) or this resolution, or having provided support to, or acted for or on behalf of, or at the direction of, an individual or an entity that the Committee has designated pursuant to paragraphs 36 or 37 of resolution 2134 (2014) or this resolution, or an entity owned or controlled by a designated individual or entity;

14. *Welcomes* measures taken by Member States of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) to implement the Regional Initiative against Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources as endorsed in the 2010 Lusaka Declaration, including promoting the use by economic actors of Due Diligence Frameworks such as the OECD Due Diligence Guidance for Responsible Supply Chains of Minerals from Conflict-Affected and High-Risk Areas, and encourages all States, particularly those in the region, to continue to raise awareness of the due diligence guidelines;

Sanctions Committee

15. *Decides* that the mandate of the Committee established pursuant to paragraph 57 of resolution 2127 (2013) shall apply with respect to the measures imposed in paragraphs 54 and 55 of resolution 2127 (2013) and paragraphs 30 and 32 of resolution 2134 (2014) extended by this resolution;

16. *Emphasizes* the importance of holding regular consultations with concerned Member States, international and regional and subregional organizations, as may be necessary, in particular neighbouring and regional States, in order to ensure full implementation of the measures renewed by this resolution, and in that regard encourages the Committee to consider, where and when appropriate, visits to selected countries by the Chair and/or Committee members;

17. *Requests* the Committee to identify possible cases of non-compliance with the measures pursuant to paragraphs 1, 2, 5 and 8 above and to determine the appropriate course of action on each case, and requests the Chair, in regular reports to the Council pursuant to paragraph 31 below, to provide progress reports on the Committee's work on this issue;

18. *Recognizes* the KP's decision that CAR may resume trade in rough diamonds from "compliant zones" established under conditions set forth by the KP, notes that the KP intends to keep the Security Council, the Committee and its Panel of Experts, and MINUSCA informed of its decisions and, thereby, requests the KP Chair of the Working Group on Monitoring to periodically update the Committee on

the work of the KP CAR Monitoring Team, including any decisions on areas designated as "compliant zones" and decisions related to the trade of the stockpiles of rough diamonds held in CAR;

19. *Calls* for enhanced vigilance from trading centres and States in the region to support the CAR transitional authorities' efforts to re-establish legitimate trade and benefit from its natural resources; and commends CAR for taking special measures to enhance traceability of diamonds from compliant zones so that diamonds are not used for the benefit of armed groups or to destabilize CAR;

20. *Encourages* the KP to resolve the issue of the diamond stockpiles in cooperation with the CAR authorities and in consultation with the Panel of Experts;

Panel of Experts

21. *Expresses* its full support for the Panel of Experts on the Central African Republic established pursuant to paragraph 59 of resolution 2127 (2013);

22. *Decides* to extend the mandate of the Panel of Experts until 28 February 2017 and, *expresses its intent* to review the mandate and take appropriate action regarding further extension no later than 31 January 2017 and *requests* the Secretary-General to take the necessary administrative measures as expeditiously as possible to support its action;

23. *Decides* that the mandate of the Panel of Experts shall include the following tasks, to:

(a) Assist the Committee in carrying out its mandate as specified in this resolution, including through providing the Committee with information relevant to the potential designation at a later stage of individuals or entities who may be engaging in the activities described in paragraphs 12 and 13 above;

(b) Gather, examine and analyse information from States, relevant United Nations bodies, regional organizations and other interested parties regarding the implementation of the measures decided in this resolution, in particular incidents of non-compliance, including to facilitate, upon request by Member States, assistance on capacity-building;

(c) Provide to the Committee a midterm report no later than 30 July 2016 and a final report to the Security Council, after discussion with the Committee, by 31 December 2016 on the implementation of the measures imposed by paragraphs 54 and 55 of resolution 2127 (2013) and paragraphs 30 and 32 of resolution 2134 (2014) renewed by paragraphs 1, 2, 5 and 8 of this resolution;

(d) Submit progress updates to the Committee, especially in situations of urgency, or as the Panel deems necessary;

(e) Assist the Committee in refining and updating information on the list of individuals and entities designated by the Committee pursuant to the criteria renewed by paragraphs 11 and 12 above including through the provision of biometric information and additional information for the publicly available narrative summary of reasons for listing;

(f) Assist the Committee by providing information regarding individuals and entities that may meet the designation criteria in paragraphs 11 and 12 above, including by reporting such information to the Committee, as it becomes available,

and to include in its formal written reports, the names of potential designees, appropriate identifying information, and relevant information regarding why the individual or entity may meet the designation criteria in paragraphs 11 and 12 above;

(g) Cooperate with the KP CAR Monitoring Team to support the resumption of exports of rough diamonds from CAR and report to the Committee if the resumption of trade is destabilizing CAR or benefiting armed groups;

24. *Calls upon* the Panel of Experts to cooperate actively with other Panels or Groups of Experts established by the Security Council, as relevant to the implementation of their mandate;

25. *Expresses* particular concern about reports of illicit trafficking networks which continue to fund and supply armed groups in the CAR, and *encourages* the Panel, in the course of carrying out its mandate, to devote special attention to the analysis of such networks;

26. *Urges* the CAR, its neighbouring States and other member States of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) to cooperate at the regional level to investigate and combat regional criminal networks and armed groups involved in the illegal exploitation and smuggling of natural resources including gold, diamonds and wildlife poaching and trafficking;

27. *Urges* all parties, and all Member States, as well as international, regional and subregional organizations to ensure cooperation with the Panel of Experts and the safety of its members;

28. *Further urges* all Member States and all relevant United Nations bodies to ensure unhindered access, in particular to persons, documents and sites in order for the Panel of Experts to execute its mandate;

29. *Requests* the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict and the Special Representative for Sexual Violence in Conflict to continue sharing relevant information with the Committee in accordance with paragraph 7 of resolution 1960 (2010) and paragraph 9 of resolution 1998 (2011);

Reporting and review

30. *Calls upon* all States, particularly those in the region and those in which designated individuals and entities designated are based, to actively implement the measures contained in this resolution and to regularly report to the Committee on the actions they have taken to implement the measures imposed by paragraphs 54 and 55 of resolution 2127 (2013) and paragraphs 30 and 32 of resolution 2134 (2014) renewed by paragraphs 1, 2, 5 and 8 of this resolution;

31. *Requests* the Committee to report orally, through its Chair, at least once per year to the Council, on the state of the overall work of the Committee, including alongside the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the CAR on the situation in the CAR as appropriate, and encourages the Chair to hold regular briefings for all interested Member States;

32. *Affirms* that it shall keep the situation in the CAR under continuous review and that it shall be prepared to review the appropriateness of the measures

contained in this resolution, including the strengthening through additional measures, in particular the freezing of assets, modification, suspension or lifting of the measures, as may be needed at any time in light of the progress achieved in the stabilization of the country and compliance with this resolution;

33. *Decides* to remain actively seized of the matter.

United Nations S/2016/82

Security Council

Distr.: General
28 January 2016

Original: English

Angola, France, Japan, New Zealand, Spain, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America and Uruguay: draft resolution

The Security Council,

Welcoming the report of the Secretary-General of 6 January 2016 (S/2016/11) on the United Nations operation in Cyprus,

Noting that the Government of Cyprus is agreed that in view of the prevailing conditions on the island it is necessary to keep the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) beyond 31 January 2016,

Noting the intention of the Secretary-General to report on his Good Offices in the next reporting period, *echoing* the Secretary-General's firm belief that the responsibility for finding a solution lies first and foremost with the Cypriots themselves, and *reaffirming* the primary role of the United Nations in assisting the parties to bring the Cyprus conflict and division of the island to a comprehensive and durable settlement,

Welcoming the good progress of negotiations, the positive momentum and the commitment expressed by the leaders to work tirelessly to reach a comprehensive settlement as soon as possible, in a results-oriented manner as agreed to in the Joint Declaration adopted by the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot leaders on 11 February 2014, and the support provided by the Secretary-General's Special Adviser on Cyprus Espen Barth Eide,

Recalling the importance attached by the international community to all parties engaging fully, flexibly and constructively in the negotiations and, *noting* that the negotiations have not yet resulted in an enduring, comprehensive and just settlement based on a bicommunal, bizonal federation with political equality, as set out in the relevant Security Council resolutions, *encouraging* the sides to intensify the substantive negotiations on the unresolved core issues interdependently, and stressing that the status quo is unsustainable,

Noting the need to advance the consideration of and discussions on military confidence-building measures, *calling for* renewed efforts to implement all remaining confidence-building measures, and for agreement on and implementation of further steps to build trust between the communities,

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Reaffirming the importance of continued crossings of the Green Line by Cypriots, and encouraging the opening by mutual agreement of other crossing points,

Convinced of the many important benefits, including economic benefits for all Cypriots that would flow from a comprehensive and durable Cyprus settlement, *urging* the two sides and their leaders to foster positive public rhetoric, and *encouraging* them clearly to explain the benefits of the settlement, as well as the need for increased flexibility and compromise in order to secure it, to both communities well in advance of any referenda,

Highlighting the importance, both political and financial, of the supporting role of the international community, and in particular that of all parties concerned in taking practical steps towards helping the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot leaders to exploit fully the current opportunity,

Taking note of the assessment of the Secretary-General that the security situation on the island and along the Green Line remains stable, and *urging* all sides to avoid any action, including violations of the military status quo, which could lead to an increase in tension, undermine the progress achieved so far, or damage the goodwill on the island,

Recalling the Secretary-General's firm belief that the situation in the buffer zone would be improved if both sides accepted the 1989 aide-memoire used by the United Nations,

Noting with regret that the sides are withholding access to the remaining minefields in the buffer zone, and that demining in Cyprus must continue, *noting* the continued danger posed by mines in Cyprus, *noting also* proposals and discussions as well as positive initiatives on demining, and *urging* rapid agreement on facilitating the recommencement of demining operations and clearance of the remaining minefields,

Commending the work of the Committee on Missing Persons, *highlighting* the importance of intensifying its activities, and therefore the need to provide all information required, *noting* that nearly half of all missing persons have yet to be located and around 69% have yet to be identified, *welcoming* moves to allow the Committee access to 30 additional suspected burial sites in military areas in north Cyprus, *urging* the opening up of access to all areas expeditiously to allow the Committee to carry out its work, and *trusting* that this process will promote reconciliation between the communities,

Agreeing that active participation of civil society groups, including women's groups, is essential to the political process and can contribute to making any future settlement sustainable, *recalling* that women play a critically important role in peace processes, *welcoming* all efforts to promote bicommunal contacts and events including, inter alia, on the part of all United Nations bodies on the island, and *urging* the two sides to promote the active engagement of civil society and the encouragement of cooperation between economic and commercial bodies and to remove all obstacles to such contacts,

Stressing the need for the Council to pursue a rigorous, strategic approach to peacekeeping deployments,

Welcoming the intention of the Secretary-General to keep all peacekeeping operations under close review to ensure efficiency and effectiveness, *including* a review of UNFICYP when appropriate, and *noting* the importance of transition planning in relation to the settlement, including recommendations as appropriate for further adjustments to UNFICYP's mandate, force levels and other resources and concept of operations, taking into account developments on the ground and the views of the parties,

Noting with appreciation the efforts of Lisa Buttenheim as the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Force Commander Major General Kristin Lund, and the Secretary-General's appointment of Special Adviser Espen Barth Eide,

Echoing the Secretary-General's gratitude to the Government of Cyprus and the Government of Greece for their voluntary contributions to the funding of UNFICYP, and his request for further voluntary contributions from other countries and organizations, and *expressing* appreciation to Member States that contribute personnel to UNFICYP,

Welcoming and encouraging efforts by the United Nations to sensitize peacekeeping personnel in the prevention and control of HIV/AIDS and other communicable diseases in all its peacekeeping operations,

1. *Welcomes* the progress of the leaders-led negotiations so far and the ongoing efforts of the leaders and their negotiators to reach a comprehensive and durable settlement, and *encourages* the sides to grasp the current opportunity with determination to secure a comprehensive settlement;

2. *Takes note* of the reports of the Secretary-General (S/2016/11) and (S/2016/15);

3. *Recalls* Security Council resolution 2026 (2011), and *calls* upon the two leaders to:

(a) Put their efforts behind further work on reaching convergences on the core issues;

(b) Continue to work with the Technical Committees with the objective of improving the daily lives of the Cypriots;

(c) Improve the public atmosphere for the negotiations, including by focusing public messages on convergences and the way ahead, and delivering more constructive and harmonised messages; and

(d) Increase the participation of civil society in the process as appropriate;

4. *Urges* the implementation of confidence-building measures, and *looks forward* to agreement on and implementation of further such mutually-acceptable steps, including military confidence-building measures and the opening of crossing points already agreed upon and others, that can contribute to a conducive environment for a settlement;

5. *Welcomes* all efforts to accommodate the Committee on Missing Persons exhumation requirements as well as the joint appeal for information issued by the two leaders on 28 May 2015, and *calls upon* all parties to provide more expeditious, full access to all areas, given the need to intensify the Committee's work;

6. *Reaffirms* all its relevant resolutions on Cyprus, in particular resolution 1251 (1999) of 29 June 1999 and subsequent resolutions;

7. *Expresses* its full support for UNFICYP and *decides* to extend its mandate for a further period ending 31 July 2016; and to increase force levels to 888;

8. *Calls* on both sides to continue to engage, as a matter of urgency and while respecting UNFICYP's mandate, in consultations with UNFICYP on the demarcation of the buffer zone, and on the United Nations 1989 aide-memoire, with a view to reaching early agreement on outstanding issues;

9. *Calls* on the Turkish Cypriot side and Turkish forces to restore in Strovilia the military status quo which existed there prior to 30 June 2000;

10. *Calls* on both sides to allow access to deminers and to facilitate the removal of the remaining mines in Cyprus within the buffer zone, and urges both sides to extend demining operations outside the buffer zone;

11. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit a report on implementation of this resolution, including on contingency planning in relation to the settlement, by 8 July 2016 and to keep the Security Council updated on events as necessary;

12. *Welcomes* the efforts being undertaken by UNFICYP to implement the Secretary-General's zero tolerance policy on sexual exploitation and abuse and to ensure full compliance of its personnel with the United Nations code of conduct, *requests* the Secretary-General to continue to take all necessary action in this regard and to keep the Security Council informed, and *urges* troop-contributing countries to take appropriate preventive action including the conduct of pre-deployment awareness training, and to take disciplinary action and other action to ensure full accountability in cases of such conduct involving their personnel;

13. *Decides* to remain seized of the matter.

United Nations A/70/700–S/2016/83

General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.: General
29 January 2016
English
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General Assembly
Seventieth session
Agenda items 108 and 117

Security Council
Seventy-first year

Measures to eliminate international terrorism

The United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy

Letter dated 18 January 2016 from the Permanent Representative of Armenia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith the joint statement of the Heads of States members of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) on countering international terrorism, which was adopted at the session of the Council on Collective Security held in Moscow on 21 December 2015 (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 108 and 117, and as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Zohrab **Mnatsakanyan**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

16-01289 (E) 040216 040216

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Annex to the letter dated 18 January 2016 from the Permanent Representative of Armenia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Statement of the Heads of States members of the Collective Security Treaty Organization on countering international terrorism

We, the Heads of States members of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), note with deep concern the greatly increased threat of terrorism to international peace and security and to the sovereignty of States.

We reiterate our strong condemnation of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and stress that no acts of terrorism can be justified on ideological, religious, political, racial, ethnic or any other grounds.

We believe that terrorist massacres of civilians, the wanton destruction of historical monuments and the desecration of religious sites are incompatible with the norms of morality, humanism and spirituality.

Convinced of the need to consolidate the efforts of the entire international community in order to combat terrorism effectively, we support the establishment of a broad coalition based on the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations and the norms and principles of international law, without politicization or preconditions. We call upon all States to comply strictly with the requirements of the counter-terrorism resolutions of the United Nations Security Council and the General Assembly.

Priority should be given to firmly suppressing the activities of the terrorist group Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), which has unleashed terrible bloodshed in many countries and poses a threat to all humanity.

We acknowledge the greater security threats in Central Asia related to increased activity by ISIL, the Taliban, Al-Qaida and other terrorist organizations in Afghanistan, resulting in a spike in tension on the southern boundaries of CSTO that directly threatens to destabilize the situation within its area of responsibility.

We believe that enhancing cooperation within existing regional structures and broadening counter-terrorism cooperation among States at the political level, and at the level of the special services and relevant ministries and departments, will help to maintain stability in Eurasia and in the world as a whole.

We attach great importance to further strengthening comprehensive measures to counter the ideology of international terrorism and religious extremism. We are convinced that, in order to bolster the immunity of individuals against the spread of radical ideas, the efforts of relevant public authorities must be supplemented by the capacity of civic structures, the media and religious denominations.

We are convinced that effective counter-terrorism is possible only if the sources of its financing are reliably cut off, as required by pertinent Security Council resolutions and international standards of the Financial Action Task Force. In that context, we welcome the adoption by the United Nations of Security Council resolution 2253 (2015) of 17 December 2015 to counter the financing of terrorism and its call upon all States to take the necessary measures against ISIL, Al-Qaida and other associated individuals, groups and organizations. We reaffirm the

responsibility of all States to undertake efforts to identify organizations, individuals and entities with economic ties to ISIL and other terrorist groups, and to reliably block the channels financing terrorism.

We also share the resolve of the international community, reaffirmed in Security Council resolution 2254 (2015) of 18 December 2015, to scale up efforts to combat terrorism in the Syrian Arab Republic while simultaneously promoting a peaceful political settlement through negotiations between the Syrian Government and a broad spectrum of the opposition.

We intend to consistently strengthen the force capacity of CSTO, to upgrade its counter-terrorism component and to enhance the combat readiness of its collective rapid reaction forces in order to effectively counter new threats and challenges.

Signed by the Heads of State of the Republic of Armenia, the Republic of Belarus, the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Russian Federation and the Republic of Tajikistan.

Moscow,
21 December 2015

United Nations S/2016/84

Security Council

Distr.: General
28 January 2016

Original: English

Letter dated 27 January 2016 from the Permanent Representative of Saudi Arabia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit to you herewith a letter from the Special Representative of the Syrian National Coalition to the United Nations, Najib Ghadbian, dated 27 January 2016 (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would circulate the present letter and its annex as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Abdallah **Al-Mouallimi**
Permanent Representative

16-01225 (E) 010216 010216

Please recycle

Annex to the letter dated 27 January 2016 from the Permanent Representative of Saudi Arabia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

On behalf of the National Coalition of Syrian Revolutionary and Opposition Forces, I have the honour to forward to you a letter from the Supreme Negotiating Committee, originally submitted to the Secretary-General on 26 January 2016, outlining our position regarding the forthcoming Geneva conference on Syria and our ongoing efforts to reach a political solution to the crisis in Syria.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its enclosure circulated to the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Najib **Ghadbian**
Special Representative to the United Nations

Enclosure

[Original: Arabic]

At the outset, we should like to thank Your Excellency for the great efforts you have made to achieve the noble goals of the United Nations and, in particular, your efforts to end the suffering of the Syrian people and resolve the Syrian crisis. We are all confident that you are aware of the efforts being made by the Supreme Negotiating Committee to ensure the success of the political process aimed at finding a solution to the Syrian question.

In that connection, the Supreme Negotiating Committee met on 26 January 2016 and sought to arrive at outcomes that strengthen the country, preserve its unity and safeguard the interests of its people.

The Supreme Negotiating Committee therefore is favourably disposed to participation in negotiations that would lead to the commencement of a political process to bring about a political solution to the Syrian crisis. The terms of reference for such negotiations should be the Geneva communiqué of 30 June 2012 and Security Council resolution 2118 (2013), and the solution should be implemented through the establishment of a transitional governing body with full executive authorities. State institutions should be preserved while the military and the security agencies should be restructured. Security Council resolution 2254 (2015) should be implemented without any exceptions or selectivity on the ground before the negotiating sessions begin, particularly as regards the following:

- Ending the siege of besieged areas, cities and towns
- Humanitarian assistance should be delivered to all those who need it
- Detainees, prisoners of conscience and persons, particularly women and children, detained pursuant to special laws or laws that do not accord with human rights principles should be released
- All attacks against civilians and civilian targets must be halted, as must the indiscriminate use of weapons, including artillery shelling and aerial bombardment
- Forced displacement and demographic change must be halted

The Supreme Negotiating Committee stresses that countering terrorism must not override implementation of the provisions of the Geneva communiqué of 30 June 2012 in the manner noted above.

Given the desire to ensure the success of negotiations, the international community, represented by the Security Council, must do everything possible to end all illegal measures that impede implementation of Security Council resolution 2254 (2015), regardless of whether those measures are taken by the Syrian regime or its allies.

The Supreme Negotiating Committee will communicate its detailed observations regarding the invitation letter through your Special Envoy for Syria, Mr. Staffan de Mistura.

We hope that you will give our letter due attention, so as to give impetus to the efforts of the international community to start the process aimed at achieving a political solution that fulfils the aspirations of the Syrian people through the implementation of authoritative international resolutions.

(*Signed*) Riyad **Hijab**
General Coordinator, Supreme Negotiating Committee